Pentagon Follies: From Sputnik to the Flying Submarine

Tower Power: How the Air Controllers Feathered Their Bed

The Washington Monthly

OCTOBER 1981/$2

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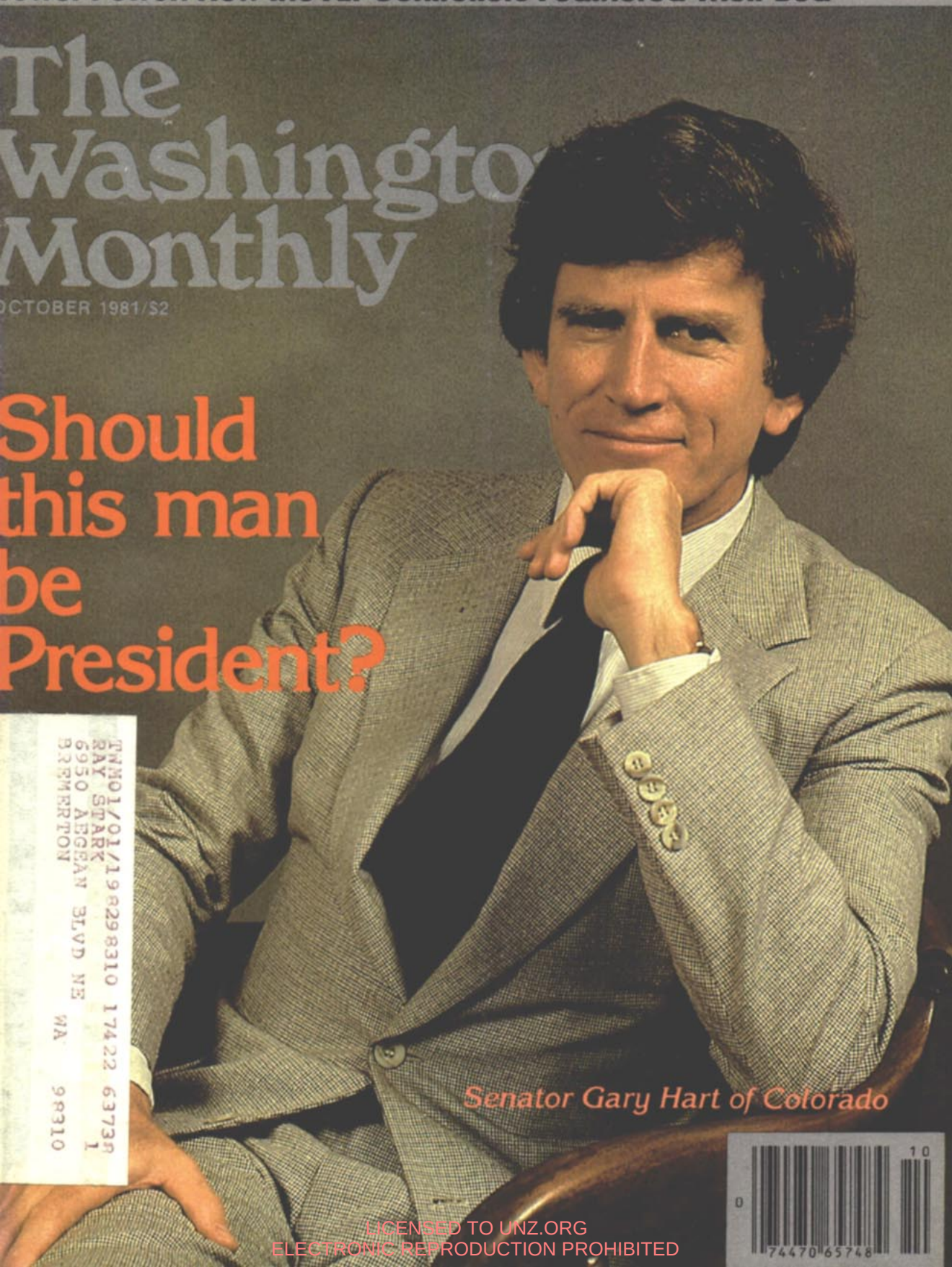

Senator Gary Hart of Colorado

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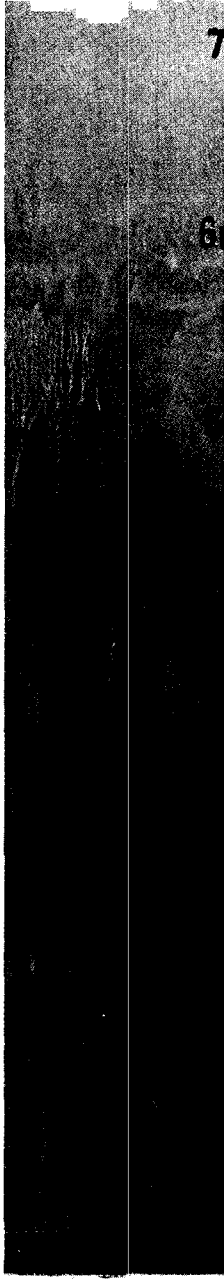

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Letters

Not Amused

Jeffrey Angus's article ["ENDALL: The Ultimate Cost-Benefit Analysis," July/August] failed to incorporate a needed disclaimer: "Any correspondence between the material herein and President Reagan's program of regulatory relief is purely coincidental."

JAMES C. MILLER III
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Miller was executive director of the Presidential Task Force on Regulatory Relief before being named chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

Two-Tom-er

Is the Thomas N. Bethell who wrote "Reagan's Tax-Cut 'Revolution,'" [by Thomas N. Bethell, July/August] the same Tom Bethell who writes right-wing stuff for the *American Spectator?*

T. R. KENISTON
Denver, Colorado

The editors reply:

No, they are two entirely different, unrelated people, a source of endless confusion to our readers, our office staff ("Tom Bethell called you"), and both Bethells' friends. Tom Bethell worked with the *Monthly* as an editor in the mid-1970s; he now writes for *Harper's* and *The American Spectator*. His views tend toward the right. Thomas N. Bethell first wrote for the *Monthly* in the late 1960s, then returned as an editor here in 1979 and 1980. He generally leans toward the left. Both are now contributing editors; see page 4 for the dual listing.

Stories of Bethell versus Bethell confusion are too numerous to catalogue. Recently Thomas N. Bethell won a business writing award that, by coincidence, Tom Bethell had won the year before. The press release said, "This is the second straight year Tom Bethell has won."

Our only disappointment is that so far we have been able to find just two Tom Bethells to be editors of this magazine. Surely there are others out there. We have an editorial opening right now, and we urge all Tom Bethells to apply.

Government and history students

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So Sioux Me

In journalistic tilting at windmills, simple laziness can be as damaging as Alzheimer's disease.

Your column ["Tilting at Windmills," July/August] snidely notes the size of Arthur Lazarus's legal fees from the Sioux Tribes' Black Hills case and then quotes Arthur's typically prickly response. You should have made the effort to ascertain just how much time Arthur really had "spent on the case."

I don't know how long exactly, but it's on the order of *thirty years*—quite a saga. No one but Arthur would have or could have devoted the time, energy, and expertise necessary to achieve ultimate victory for the Sioux.

I hold no brief for my greedy colleagues before the bar, but there are much better targets for your sharp pen than Arthur Lazarus.

MARTIN A. KAMARCK
Washington, D.C.

Ms.-Informed

Something has particularly bothered me since I began reading *The Washington Monthly*. It's not a glaring error, but I suppose it is the small things that get to you.

In your listing of "Who's Who in the Administration," there are differences in the way qualifications are presented. For instance, in the April 1981 issue, Ms. Mabel Hobard Brandon had her nickname listed. Now I realize Ms. Hobard may very well prefer the name "Muffie," may even be known *only* by the name "Muffie," but not one other man listed in the column had his nickname published. Neither did any of the men have their wives' names and positions mentioned, as did Ms. Carol Bauman. You may feel Ms. Bauman had no other qualifications for the position, but the fact remains that she should be given credit for her work on her own merits—unless her husband *is* carrying the weight of her work.

It's hard enough to be taken seriously as a woman and a professional without a great publication like *The Washington Monthly* making these kinds of digs.

BARBARA STEVENS
San Diego, California

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"Where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe."

–Thomas Jefferson

The best ideas are the ideas that help people. ITT

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—**Eric Redman in *The Washington Post***

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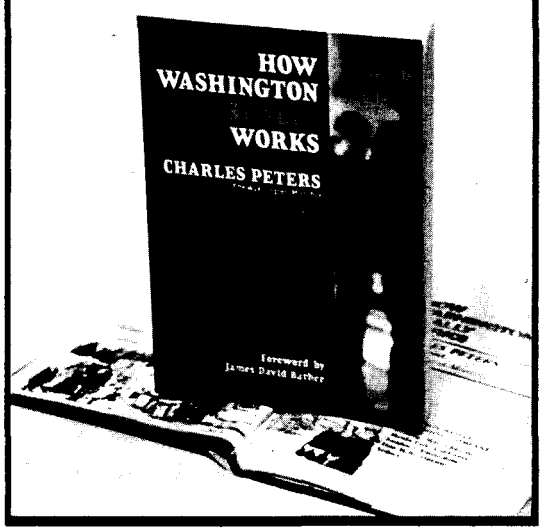

The Washington Monthly

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VOLUME THIRTEEN NUMBER EIGHT
OCTOBER 1981

Tilting at Windmills
by Charles Peters
The phantom freeway . . . the importance of being Winston . . . and other odds and ends. 6

From Sputnik to the Flying Submarine
by Gregg Easterbrook
How Pentagon rivalries gave us the MX. 10

Featherbedding In the Tower
by Jonathan Alter
How the controllers let the cat out of the bag. 22

Should Gary Hart Be President?
by Robert M. Kaus
He's done it on defense. Now he's looking for "third options" on other issues. 30

Questions the Press Didn't Ask About the Atlanta Murders
by Charles Euchner
Everybody knew it was a racist conspiracy . . . after all, Dick Gregory said so. 45

Ten Ways to Take Back What We Gave Japan
by Robert C. Wood
"The problem with this company," one Tokyo worker noted, "is our Japanese-style management." 47

LETTERS 2
MEMO OF THE MONTH 56
MONTHLY JOURNALISM AWARD 20
POLITICAL BOOKNOTES 57
POLITICAL PUZZLE 52
TIDBITS AND OUTRAGES 28
WHERE TO STAY IN WASHINGTON 55
WHO'S WHO 53

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Tilting at Windmills

Have you ever heard of Los Angeles's Century Freeway? If not, you should have, because it has cost federal and state taxpayers $325 million. A little high, you say, but still within reason for a full-fledged freeway. Well, the problem is that it doesn't exist yet—not one foot of highway has been built. The money has been spent on law suits, land acquisition, environmental impact studies, and on such clear necessities as a Project Civil Rights Director, a Housing Advisory Committee, and a "Corridor Advocate." If the freeway is completed it will, according to William Trombley of *The Los Angeles Times*, cost about $2 billion. Of that sum, 92 percent will be paid by federal taxpayers. How much highway will they buy? Exactly 17.2 miles. . . .

We have noted that every cruise ship seems to have a medical seminar somewhere below deck to justify tax deductibility for the physicians on board. Well, there's a new wrinkle to the racket. The 1981 Fall Faculty Workshops of the University of Michigan's Institute of Continuing Legal Education are to be held in Ann Arbor on six Saturday mornings from 9 to 11 and will cover such subjects as commercial contract litigation and estate planning. The cost is $300, but all expenses connected with the workshop, including transportation and lodging, are of course tax deductible.

The six Saturdays, incidentally, happen to coincide with Michigan's home football games with Notre Dame, Navy, Iowa, Northwestern, Illinois, and Ohio State. . . . *W* magazine, according to its current ad in *Advertising Age,* has a readership whose mean family income is $87,200—one in five are millionaires. To suggest the

nature of the subscribers' world in a way that will appeal to the decision-makers of Madison Avenue, the ad features a photograph of an elegant-looking couple getting into an elegant-looking car in front of an elegant-looking house, carrying on this dialogue:

"Isn't Machu Picchu in the spring a marvelous idea?"

"Splendid."

"Did you love the new canapes from the gourmet shop?"

"Splendid."

"Aren't you thrilled with the new oriental in the library?"

"Splendid."

"Mummy ran amuck and threw a hand grenade at the Pentagon."

"Splendid."

"What Federal Bail Problem?" asked the lead editorial in *The New York Times* on August 24. It went on to say, "The 1966 bail law was a memorable reform. It told federal judges . . . the only question at a bail hearing was whether the defendant, if released, will show up for the trial." In the course of defending the 1966 act, the editorial never mentioned the problem of witness protection. This is the kind of liberal innocence that maddens people who understand the realities of law enforcement. A violent criminal who is free on bail can make sure there will be no problem presented at his trial by the simple device of eliminating any witnesses who might testify against him. If the *Times* editorial writer is not aware of this danger, potential witnesses are. That's why so many of them clam up and refuse to talk. Ironically the problem was never better illustrated than in an article appearing the day before in the *Times* under the headline, "Organized Crime Said to Rule Fulton Fish Market":

"A federal prosecutor has charged that organized crime dominated the Fulton Fish Market in lower Manhattan, terrorizing legitimate businessmen and threatening them with death if they testify in a continuing investigation. Daniel H. Bookin, the prosecutor, made the accusation in Federal District Court at the recent arraignment of several defendants indicted on charges of racketeering, extortion and labor payoffs in the market.

"'The fear that these men engender in the Fulton Fish Market is simply unbelievable,' Mr. Bookin said, adding that 'one government witness in this investigation was shot five times as he walked through the Fulton Fish Market.' Describing the main defendant, Carmine Romano of Manhattan, Mr. Bookin asserted that 'he is the man who runs the Fulton Fish Market for the Genovese crime family—he is the most feared person in the market.'

"'Your Honor,' the prosecutor said, addressing Judge Leonard B. Sand, 'the businessmen in the Fulton Fish Market are terrified of some, at least, of the defendants in this investigation. I have seen businessmen who always considered themselves to be honest, law-abiding citizens

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commit perjury knowingly and willfully before the grand jury to avoid testifying against these defendants. Perhaps the best example of fear is two businessmen who were so afraid to testify that they went to jail rather than testify before the grand jury.'

"Mr. Bookin then read the following excerpt from the transcript of the grand jury appearance of one of the businessmen:

"Q. Did anyone in your company ever pay any money to Carmine Romano?

"A. I can't answer that question.

"Q. Why can't you answer it?

"A. I cannot answer because I am not ready to die. I have a family to look after." . . .

You may recall that I view the regulated public utilities as a shell game. To potential investors they say, "Look at all the profits we're making." But to the regulatory agencies they say, "What profits?" This matter first came to my attention while I was serving in the West Virginia legislature. AT&T's local subsidiary, the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, had petitioned the state government for a rate increase, pleading the direst kind of poverty. Several days later, AT&T's New York headquarters announced record profits and a 3-to-1 stock split.

The game goes on. Columbia Gas Company has reported rises in its net profits from $115 million in 1976 to $175 million in 1980, and for the first half of 1981 alone, the profit was $117 million. Yet, according to James A. Haught of *The Charleston Gazette*, the company's West Virginia subsidiary reported a $4 million loss and seeks $121 million in rate increases.

Haught tried to find out just how separate the operations of the West Virginia subsidiary, Columbia Gas of West Virginia, were from its parent company. He discovered that Columbia Gas of West Virginia has no headquarters in West Virginia and that its home office is in the Columbia Gas national headquarters in Columbus, Ohio. When the national company's publicity spokesman was asked to name the president of the West Virginia company he said he would have to look it up. It turned out that two Columbia executives are president and chairman of all seven of the national company's retail subsidiaries. The retail company's earnings aren't even listed in the national reports. If you're beginning to suspect the subsidiaries exist only as a device for conning state regulatory boards, you just might be on the right track.

How does the parent company keep the profit moving out of its subsidiaries so they can present a suitably impoverished appearance before state regulators? Well, here's one way Columbia does it. It has a drilling and purchasing subsidiary in Texas that makes a profit on the gas it sells through Columbia's pipeline. The pipeline company then makes another profit on the gas it sells to a regional distributor that is also a Columbia subsidiary, and that company in turn makes a profit on the gas it sells to the state retail company. None of these profits show up on the books of the state company as profit—in fact they appear as operating expenses, decreasing net income—but all of them do go to the national company, where they add up to those steadily rising annual earnings. . . .

If you think that only ignorant hillbillies are victimized by such shell games, consider the Maryland Insurance Division, one of the better staffed of all the state agencies regulating the insurance industry. What happened when the State Farm Mutual Automotive Insurance Company recently asked it for a 9.8-percent rate increase? According to *The Washington Post*'s Jackson Diehl:

"State examiners had one meeting with State Farm to hear a presentation on the proposed rate increase in January, and checked the mathematics involved in the company's calculations. Then, without further examination, they recommended approval.

"Three days later, Commissioner Edward Birrane granted the increase, thus raising insurance rates for some 14 percent of the state's auto market. There was no public hearing. . . .

"As it turned out, the State Farm case became an unusual one for the insurance division—for instead of quietly going into effect, State Farm's rates were challenged by a national insurance consumer organization, forcing the department to reopen the case. The consumer group's actuaries charged that, instead of a ten-percent increase, State Farm's rates should have been reduced by 6.1 percent.

"In every other respect, however, State Farm's rate increase—and its handling—was typical of the way this state agency goes about regulating some 900 property insurance companies worth $174 billion. The examination of rate increases for auto and other property-casualty insurance, perhaps the most important job of the insurance division from the consumer's view, frequently amounts to little more than 'checking the math' of the companies' presentations, without any independent calculations to determine if the requested rates were fair or justified." . . .

The headline over a UPI story from Knoxville, Tennessee, read "Woman Teacher Charged in Rape of Boy, 13." It seems one Carol Elizabeth Choksy Humphreys, a 31-year-old teacher, had been charged with rape for having engaged in "various sexual acts about 60 times" with the youth. The

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prosecutor said, "We do not believe any force was used, but it doesn't make any difference."

This case is a bit extreme, but as a former 13-year-old boy, I think there is something to be said in Humphreys's behalf. My guess is that Humphreys not only did not traumatize the young man but gave him what most of us desperately wanted but could only dream of at that age. Certainly my entire adolescence was spent in a state of constant heat, yearning for even the slightest gesture of affection from the Carol Humphreyses of my world.

I realize that there are probably some mothers out there who will not immediately leap to agree with me, but the law is indeed strange in its application to the adolescent male. In addition to being randier than the average female of his age, he is also much likelier to wreck cars and commit crimes of violence. There would be less of the latter two, I suspect, if there were more Carol Humphreyses. In any event, reality seems to be faced only by auto insurance companies, which in the District of Columbia charge families $116.40 extra for female teenage drivers and $268.70 for males. . . .

Not long ago I was complaining about the fact that the rest of us have to subsidize the private clubs of the rich, who often treat their dues as tax deductions. I was right about that. But then I said such clubs, when nonprofit, usually were not assessed for real estate taxes. And here I was wrong. While some nonprofit private groups are not assessed, the problem more often is not nonassessment but underassessment. Both cases appear in the 2100 block of Massachusetts Avenue here in Washington, where nonprofit groups, the Society of Cincinnati and the Cosmos Club, occupy two of the city's most elegant buildings. There is no assessment at all in the case of the Society, even though its members use the premises for some of the city's grandest parties. In the case of the Cosmos Club, there is an assessment of $2,971,000. That sounds impressive until one looks at the assessment for lots of comparable size on the block. There are two such properties. The assessment for one is $5,814,000; for the other, it's $7,079,750. Both buildings are larger but would cost less to reproduce than the Cosmos Club, and neither has the luxury of the Cosmos' own street-level parking lot, almost always a mark of non- or underassessed property. . . .

To return to utilities, there are fascinating variations in their rates. People in Pittsburgh pay $6.12 for phone service that costs $11.95 in Cleveland. People in Louisville pay $2.74 for the same natural gas that costs their neighbors 75 miles away in Lexington $3.97. Electricity available for 3.6 cents in Indianapolis costs 6.4 cents in Columbus. Take a look at how your rates compare with those in comparable communities. If they make no more sense than the above, begin raising hell with your utility company and regulatory agency—show them you won't be fooled by the kind of trick Columbia Gas is trying to pull in West Virginia. . . .

How did congressmen respond when it was revealed they were pocketing leftover campaign contributions? Former Rep. Al Ullman, who took $17,333, called it a "liquidation of surplus." Former Rep. Ray Roberts took $13,014, describing it as a "transfer to personal account upon retirement." Former Rep. Thomas Ashley kept $20,000 as a "distribution of excess funds." Morgan Murphy called his $13,350 a "close-out." . . .

Whenever I am tempted to join in the ridicule of Norman Mailer and the other literati who sponsored the murderer Jack Abbott, I recall my first criminal case. My client's name was Chicago Red. He quickly convinced me that he was not guilty of the burglary with which he was charged. In fact, he got me so fired up that even though there was a bit of evidence against him, like several witnesses who had seen him commit the crime, I managed to convince the prosecuting attorney that I would put up such a fight that he would have to abandon all hope of going on his fall hunting trips. So the charge was dismissed. I called a friend in Pittsburgh, who promised to get Chicago Red a job. I contributed a bus ticket to Pittsburgh and an old Brooks Brothers suit I had always resented for the accurate indication it gave of the width of my shoulders.

The morning after Chicago Red's release, I picked up the local paper and was confronted by a headline, "Break-In at County Jail." It seems Chicago Red had cashed in his bus ticket and pawned his suit—maybe he didn't like those narrow shoulders either—and bought a shotgun. With it he attempted to break into the jail and free some of his friends. The venture was unsuccessful, but I regarded it as so admirably Quixotic that I once again came to Red's defense. This time I argued that however unfortunate the episode might have been, it had not been anticipated by the state legislature and thus there was no such crime as breaking into a jail.

The next time I heard about Red, it was a news report from Texas. It seems that shortly after being sentenced to the state penitentiary there, he had confessed to a flock of crimes in West Virginia. I was puzzled because Red had heretofore not struck me as a man excessively burdened by guilt. Then a friend, more sophisticated about crime than I, explained that Texas was famed for having the toughest prison in the country and that prudent men, upon finding themselves within its walls, soon

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began to search their consciences for infractions committed in gentler jurisdictions.

Since Red never actually injured anyone, I never feared or disliked him. But there were a good many criminals I defended—and I defended a lot because my success in his cases had given me a certain celebrity at the Kanawha County jail—who scared the hell out of me. They were the cold-blooded criminals who either killed or injured or put in fear people who had done nothing to them. The more I got to know these cruel men, the more I knew they belonged in prison for a long time. Curiously enough, experience with other criminals, like nonviolent first offenders and people who had committed hot-blooded crimes in the course of family fights, made me an advocate of probation or early release for almost everyone except the cold bloods. But for them, I think the protection of society demands lengthy imprisonment.

That's why I get so angry when I read articles like Tom Wicker's "How to 'Revulse' the Public" in a recent issue of *The New York Times* that react only with ridicule to the administration's proposal to spend $2 billion on new prisons. Maybe $2 billion is too much, but we do need prisons that can house all the cold bloods and keep them from escaping. At the same time, since we want to keep them there a long time, the living conditions should not be inhuman. Clearly the prisons we have now are neither adequate nor decent. Part of the problem can be solved with probation for the nonviolent and early release for the hot bloods. But I suspect all of the problem won't be solved until we're willing to throw some money at it. . . .

Remember the cancer-causing substance, Kepone, that was dumped into the James River in the early seventies by your friends at Allied Chemical? When it was discovered, fishing was halted in the area. But after the Kepone level in the river went down for several years, fishing was permitted again. Now the Kepone level is going back up. The Kepone found in croaker, spot, trout, and bluefish in July exceeded the federal limit. But fishing hasn't been stopped. How can you tell whether the fish you buy are James River fish? You can't. The FDA does not test fish at the dockside. It tests samples at the markets. If the sample doesn't happen to include your Kepone-tainted fish, there's always the supplementary cancer coverage available from Mutual of Omaha. . . .

Of the many kinds of snobbery in America, surely the most enduring has been the one based on name. Since the early nineteenth century, every college president and minister has needed a name like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. However impoverished a mother and father may be, they can, by giving their child a name with just the right aristocratic ring, assure him a place of honor in American society.

Consider the case of Winston Lord. When I first read a dozen or so years ago that someone of that name had joined Henry Kissinger's staff, I said, "Someday that young man will be president of the Council on Foreign Relations." And of course it has come to pass. For all I know, Lord may be the wisest and most charming of men, but it is my firm belief that, even if he had been the stupidest of slobs, his name alone would have proved irresistible to the foreign policy establishment. . . .

When Carl Brown was running for a seat on the county commission of Jefferson County, Kentucky, he said he thought the $20,000 a year part-time job was overpaid and promised if elected to return $3,000 of his annual salary to the state. Brown won, but now the Kentucky Supreme Court has ruled that by offering to save the county $3,000, Brown violated a law prohibiting candidates from promising "things of value" in exchange for votes. . . .

Judges are but one part of the tremendous constituency that resists any reduction in the inflated salaries of public employees. After all, judges are public employees, too. So are congressmen. And so are the teachers in public schools, at city and state colleges and universities. Excessive salaries for civil servants also tend to be supported by overpaid white-collar employees in private business, the most influential of whom are the people who work for the great news organizations.

Since most of us no matter what we make consider ourselves underpaid, we naturally tend to think of anyone making less than we do as underpaid. And since there are a lot of people at such places as CBS, NBC, ABC, *Time, Newsweek, The New York Times, The Washington Post,* and *The Los Angeles Times* making $50,000 a year or more, one hears a lot of sympathy from the media, like this in a recent issue of *Time:*

"Frustrated career employees are leaving federal jobs in droves for better pay in the private sector."

This is quite simply untrue. Of the executives who leave the civil service, *far* more do so to retire—under the generous pension plans offered by the government—than to accept better pay in the private sector.

Also misleading in its support of the civil service was this recent headline from *The New York Times:*

"4.8% Pay Increase for U.S. Employees Urged by Reagan—Raise Is Less Than One-Third That Required to Maintain Parity with Others."

The catch here is that only the highest 24 percent of private business is used in determining comparable wages for

(continued on page 60)

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FROM SPUTNIK to the FLYING SUBMARINE

How Pentagon Rivalries Gave Us the MX

by Gregg Easterbrook

"This is a great day for the Army!" the general exclaimed as the rocket jerked, buckled, then finally exploded, raining white-hot metal on its launching pad. America's first attempt to orbit a satellite, using the experimental Vanguard rocket, had just ended in nationally televised humiliation. But at least one three-star general was beside himself with delight. Why? The general was an Army general. The Vanguard was a Navy rocket.

The general's comment, made to President Eisenhower in 1957, sums up as well as any the tenor of interservice rivalries within the U.S. military establishment. Little has changed since Eisenhower's time. "These days rank officers [generals and admirals] don't get their promotions for helping the country win wars," said a retired Air Force general."They get them for helping their service branch beat the other branches."

Gregg Easterbrook is an editor of The Washington Monthly.

Interservice rivalries express themselves in many ways, from Army tanks too big to fit in Air Force transports to Navy opposition to small aircraft carriers because they would support Marine operations. (The Air Force recently launched a ship to track Soviet missile tests, apparently reluctant to trust the Navy with that job.) But since World War II, the name of the interservice game has been nuclear. Each new nuclear weapon has been thrown up for grabs—whichever service shoved the others out of the way hardest got it. Nuclear weapons have also inflamed interservice hostilities because they are so expensive. Getting your service a new "mission" carried out by very expensive devices (which requires that someone else's budget be cut to compensate) means dancing into the end zone of Pentagon politics.

The present arrangement of U.S. nuclear forces—Air Force bombers and ICBMs plus Navy missile-firing submarines in the "strategic" arm, Army short-range missiles and nuclear artillery plus Air Force and Navy nuclear-

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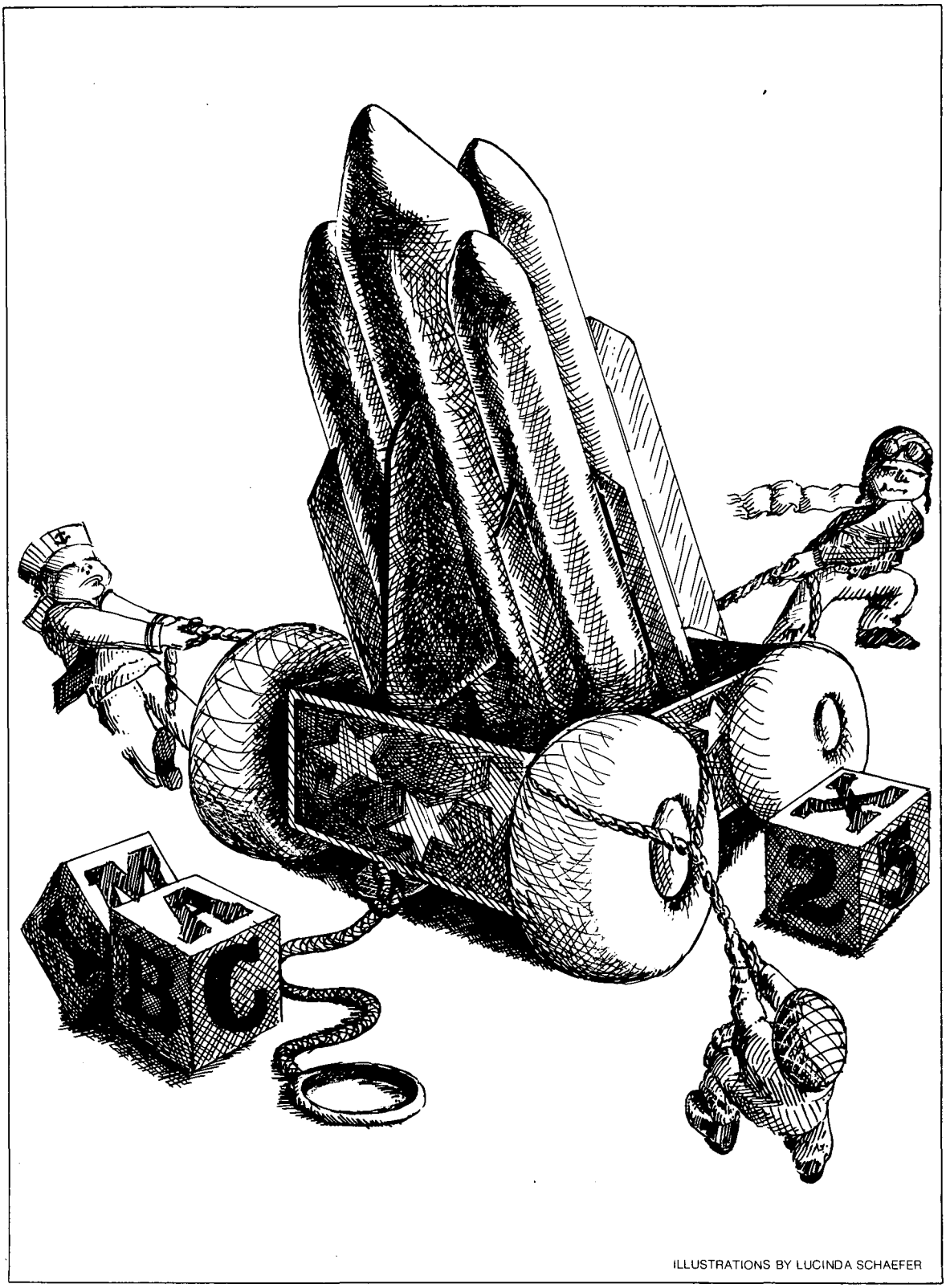

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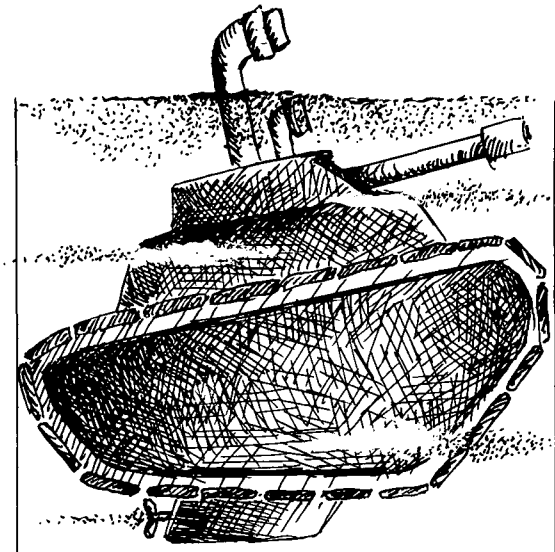
equipped fighters on the "tactical" side—emerged only after years of interservice thumb-wrestling. At many junctures things could have gone differently. The Army, for instance, nearly won control over ICBMs. Likewise, present arrangements are not unalterable. Changes in technology or world conditions might lead to changes in nuclear authority.

More than any other service, the Air Force worries about that. As the accuracy of long-range missiles improves, Air Force ICBMs may become vulnerable to attack. But the oceans continue to provide nearly impervious shelter for Navy submarines. So, many congressmen and defense critics continue to ask, why not stop building big missiles on land and put any new ones safely to sea? That prospect makes blue-clad generals about as excited as turning the Strategic Air Command into an FAA-regulated commuter airline.

And with that in mind, it's easier to understand how all this MX missile business got started in the first place. MX was designed not so much as a response to world military conditions but as a response to Washington political conditions. Whatever President Reagan ultimately decides about the system, its history sheds light on how internal pressures, not defense requirements, often shape the most important and expensive national security projects.



MX was designed not so much as a response to world military conditions but as a response to Pentagon political conditions.

Sandwiched by Submarines

Late in the 1960s, the armed forces had reached an awkward stage. Their major strategic systems—subjects of virulent 1950s interservice infighting and fast-paced 1960s construction—were essentially finished. The Air Force's B-52 bombers and Minuteman and Titan ICBMs were in place. The Navy's Polaris-Poseidon submarine fleet was at sea. Unless some new strategic projects were commissioned, activity would slow, budgets would dwindle. So the question of the day became, what next?

The Pentagon's Institute for Defense Analyses began a series of studies, called "Strat X," to determine the nature of future strategic systems. Early on, Navy submarines became the Strat X planners' darlings. Missile-firing submarines were nearly "invulnerable" because there wasn't (and still isn't) any reliable way to track them under the oceans. Advances in rocket propulsion and miniature electronic circuitry were making long-range waterborne missiles possible, meaning submarines would be able to attack the Soviet Union from almost anywhere in the seven seas. This combination—an undetectable missile "base" moving at random under billions of square miles of water—seemed to make submarines ideal for future nuclear projects.

Meanwhile there appeared to Strat X planners to be fewer and fewer arguments in favor of new land-based missiles. With their known locations, U.S. ICBMs might someday be sitting ducks to Soviet ICBMs (and vice versa) if ballistic accuracy continued to improve. Land-based missiles might become not only vulnerable but stationary targets that could tempt the Soviets to strike first.

Air Force ICBMs did have two things going in their favor. First, they are easier to communicate with than submarines. For the same reason they are safe from detection, submarines are very difficult to reach by radio—the oceans block almost all transmissions. Land-based missiles, however, can use secure, buried communication cables. Second, ICBMs are more accurate than submarine-launched missiles. The "softer" a missile's launch point, the less precise its flight; submarine-launched missiles, which pop out of

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the water on a charge of compressed gas before igniting, definitely launch "soft." And since submarine missiles never know where they'll be launching *from*, they can't employ pre-mapped flight routes. Local variations in the earth's gravitational and magnetic fields often bend missiles flying untested routes slightly off course.

The imperfect accuracy of submarine missiles seemed tolerable, however; their warheads are accurate enough to hit any city or large military facility. The only targets they can't be relied on to hit are enemy missile silos. Land-based ICBMs, on the other hand, might be made effective enough to destroy silos. But, many analysts asked, why do we need that? The ability to "kill" silos is useful only if you intend to strike first, *starting* a nuclear war. If your concern is *deterring* war, by maintaining an assured capacity for retaliation, submarine-missile accuracy is plenty.

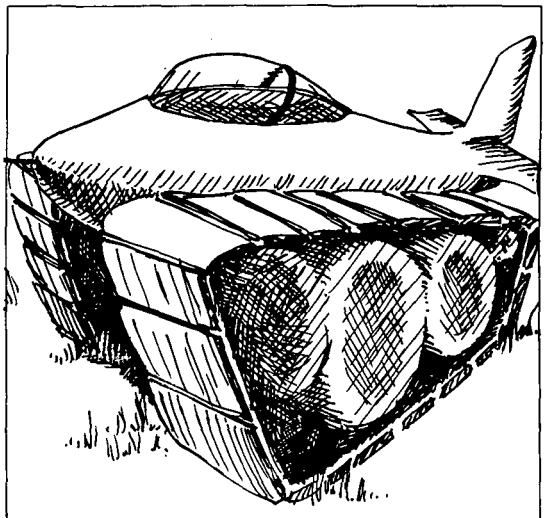
This logic tormented the Air Force generals. Try as they might, they couldn't poke a hole in it. But most of them would rather have been shot down by Baron von Richthofen than relinquish their missile role to the Navy. So during Strat X days, they began to dream of ways to make ICBMs "mobile," and hence less vulnerable to attack. Already the Pentagon had studied and rejected proposals to put Air Force missiles on special trains or even trucks that would ply the interstate highway system. Too risky; too much chance of collision, derailment, or Amtrak food. Now the Air Force proposed what Pentagon insiders called the "flying submarine"—a giant airplane, maybe the C5A, which would cruise the skies as submarines cruised the oceans. "Air mobility" studies on a "flying submarine" continued for some time. At one point a Minuteman was actually test-dropped and fired from a C5A, although it didn't fly far.

The "flying sub's" most obvious drawback was cost. Large airplanes are extremely expensive to keep in the air, both because they burn so much fuel and because jet engines wear out rapidly under continuous use. (Contrary to the popular notion, B-52s are not "always in the air." "Air alert" status is very rare and has been used only for brief periods during international crises.) There were other, more damaging problems with the plan. "Flying" submarines lacked secure communications and hard-launch accuracy, just as the regular kind did. So what was the point?

Air Force officials began to feel despondent. They had already gone out of their way on many occasions to proclaim that Minutemen would soon become vulnerable to improved Soviet missiles. Unfortunately it is a common Pentagon practice for services to "talk down" their existing weapons as part of the sales campaign for new ones. To hear some Air Force generals tell it, Minuteman ICBM fields were being kept operational solely as an act of charity to starving security-guard agencies. Thus there was a double danger: if the Air Force succeeded in convincing Congress that Minutemen were no longer good, but failed to advance any Air Force alternative, the Navy might sweep away big-missile "missions" entirely. In 1973 the Navy won funding for full-scale work on Trident, its long-range missile submarine. Sensing impending disaster, the Air Force began advanced design work on what would become the racetrack MX.

MX was to move around in some way to avoid the sitting-duck dilemma. Of course, the places where MX would be moving around would still be relatively small, known locations, subject to attack. But that problem wasn't foremost in the Air Force planners' minds. There was another, much more serious threat to the fledgling MX system—the Army.

Why not, the Army was asking, protect future



Many congressmen who thought MIRV was a talk show host were nonetheless deeply concerned about U.S. missiles—because Soviet missiles were *bigger* than ours.

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generations of Air Force missiles with an anti-missile missile? During the 1950s strategic shake-out at the Pentagon, anti-missile missiles (called ABMs) were the only large, potentially ultra-expensive nuclear "mission" the Army had won. Unfortunately for the Army, anti-missile missiles didn't work too well. The $3 billion Safeguard ABM system installed near Grand Forks, North Dakota, had so little promise it was decommissioned just five months after becoming operational in 1975. But maybe, the Army was saying, maybe some new, different ABM would work.

This prospect gave Air Force generals the willies. Because the anti-missile job is so elaborate—requiring different types of interceptor missiles guided by super-sophisticated radars and computers—in a new joint ICBM-ABM set-up, the defensive part of the system would probably be larger and more expensive than the offensive part. That meant the Air Force would be rescuing the ICBM concept only to see the bulk of the glory (and the budget money) go to the Army. So as the first MX question had not been "How can we best locate new U.S. missiles?" but "How can we keep new missiles away from the Navy?," the new question became not "How can we best protect the MX?" but "How can we keep the Army out of the MX project?"

A Day at the Racetracks

The answer, so it seemed to Air Force researchers, was the now-familiar "racetrack" scheme by which 200 missiles are shuttled among 4,600 "shelters," presenting the Soviets with 4,600 targets. (There are about 1,000 silos for Minuteman ICBMs, and hence 1,000 existing targets.) It was thought that 4,600 targets would be more than the Soviets could handle, even considering development of the multiple warhead ("MIRV") that gives attacking missiles some advantages over missiles on the ground. (One attacking missile with a ten-warhead MIRV might be able to "take out" several missiles sitting in silos or shelters.) At this point another political factor became crucial to the MX design. It was the SALT treaties.

The first SALT treaty, ratified in 1972, had proven almost as difficult to get past the Pentagon as the Politburo. In return for their backing of SALT I, President Nixon had promised the strategic services expensive new goodies—the B-1 and cruise missiles for the Air Force, Trident and Nimitz-class supercarriers for the Navy. SALT I also went a long way

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toward formalizing the modern military dogma that expensive is better. Since the nature of the treaty (perhaps of necessity) was to limit *numbers* but not *cost*, arms development now seemed to Pentagon planners little more than a budgetary exercise. Whichever side could *spend* the most on its weapons would win.

SALT II, if approved, promised to limit the number of MIRV-tipped attacking missiles the Soviets could direct against an MX system. It also limited the number of new missiles the U.S. could build; in fact SALT II would have frozen the U.S. ICBM inventory at almost exactly its pre-MX total. For every MX built, a Minuteman or Titan would have to be decommissioned—another argument, to the Air Force, for building only a small number of MXs, but making each one incredibly "capable." It was as if a car fanatic had been told he could have just one car, but it could be any car in the world.

Not surprisingly, the Air Force decided to make its MX the Lamborghini Countach of ICBMs. It would have ten independently targeted warheads, a highly advanced guidance system that could be reprogrammed rapidly, and also be *very big*. That last feature found a receptive audience in Congress.

For years, many congressmen who thought MIRV was a talk-show host had nonetheless been deeply concerned about U.S. strategic missiles, for one and only one reason—theirs were *bigger* than ours. Whenever a hearing on nuclear strength was convened, a little scale-model display of ICBMs was sure to be sitting on the chairman's desk. Soviet models would tower over U.S. ones in an H.O.-gauge phallic triumph. Congressmen couldn't seem to take their eyes off those little models, and would thunder endlessly about "throw weight." Senator Henry Jackson seemed virtually transfixed by this factor.

What Jackson and the others didn't seem to understand—and what Air Force officials soon learned not to explain—was that Soviet missiles are bigger because they are much less efficient. Soviet ICBMs are liquid-fueled, while U.S. ICBMs are solid-fueled; in addition to being more complex and less reliable, liquid-fuel systems simply take up more space. Also Soviet warheads, because of their low-quality electronics, are very large and heavy, requiring a larger missile. U.S. warheads are light and compact.

Minuteman had been, in many ways, a rare triumph of the "better is better" philosophy. Recognizing that small hydrogen warheads are more than enough to do the job, and that a small missile is much easier to handle than a large one, Air Force designers had concentrated on building the best, not a set of giant toys to amuse Congress. Now they were learning their lesson. The Air Force has long wanted to decommission its 54 large, liquid-fueled Titan II ICBMs because they have little military utility and are a threat to explode in their silos (as one did last year in Arkansas, killing two airmen). But Congress won't give permission; the Desktop Lobby wants something big to tell the folks back home about. And when it came to MX, they wanted something awesome. So the Air Force obliged. MX grew to 192,000 pounds, almost three times the weight of Minuteman. Of course, such size would make MX extremely difficult to

Navy submarines became the nuclear-war planners' darlings—so desperate Air Force generals proposed a "flying submarine."

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shuttle around on a carrier truck, or position on its launcher, complicating the plan considerably. But the complication was forgiven when the Air Force realized another benefit of excessive bulk. MX would be too big to fit on a submarine. Size would provide the ultimate insurance, Air Force brass felt, against their new missile ever being put to sea.

When President Carter was lining up support for the SALT II treaty, his turn to buy off Pentagon interest groups came. This time the Army got new battlefield nuclear missiles, the Navy got a commitment to more Tridents, and the Air Force got the racetrack MX. President Reagan, who opposed the SALT II treaty and has suggested leapfrogging to a SALT III, might consider before he goes forward whether the country can afford any more arms limitation.

Gimme Shelters

While the "racetrack" succeeded in fending off the Army, Navy, and Desktop Lobby, it generated an impressive new range of problems. First, it was not so much a new missile as a new means for launching a missile. Almost all of its $50 billion to $100 billion cost would be for concrete roadways, gargantuan carrier trucks, and those thousands of expensive but empty shelters. Very little money would actually be spent on bang-producing weapons. Modern defense planners call this arrangement "soft kill."

MX also promised to reach new horizons in actually getting complex weapons to work. Minuteman had already caused some concern in this regard; the Air Force had never managed to test-fire one from an operational silo. After several attempts ended in failure, operational testing simply was halted. Minutemen now are tested from the rocket range at Vandenberg Air Force Base, where white-coated lab technicians simulate "surprise" launchings planned months in advance. (The Russians have managed to launch a few ICBMs from operational silos, but likewise conduct most of their tests under lab-coat conditions.) Minutemen are not only smaller than MXs, but are based in a much simpler way—one permanently mounted missile in a fixed silo. If they didn't function under actual combat conditions, what would become of their far more complex cousins?

Originally the racetrack MX was to be forever circling its loop on a super-heavy carrier-launcher-shield truck—a device that doubtless would have been subject to frequent breakdowns, leaving its missile stranded. Next it was decided each MX would be dismounted awhile in one shelter, then moved to another, and so on, an arrangement perhaps worse from the reliability standpoint because it would mean frequent loading and unloading, a very delicate job when it comes to a nuclear-armed missile. Meanwhile, because of its many possible launch points, MX would have a much more complicated guidance system than Minuteman, opening a new avenue to malfunction.

The Air Force was in danger of rescuing the big-missile concept only to see most of the glory (and budget money) go to the Army.

At one point the racetrack scheme called for each 23-shelter "loop" to have 22 dummy missiles in addition to its one real missile. To make the dummies sufficiently convincing to Soviet surveillance satellites, they would have the same weight as the real missiles, be refrigerated like the real missiles, and emit radio, magnetic, and radioactive signals identical to the real missiles'—a highly complex bit of costume jewelry. There was a danger that the fakes would fail.

Some of these complexities, it must be said, were not without laudable purpose. An inspection port atop each shelter was designed to make verification of compliance with the SALT II treaty possible, and that was a gesture of commitment to arms control the Soviets have never been caught making.

The racetrack MX found itself in trouble when great public opposition arose to its cost and the amount of land it would consume. These objections have been extensively covered in the press, and are serious; yet in themselves they are not sufficient reason to oppose MX. After all, ours is a rich nation. If spending $100 billion for a new missile system were a necessity, then the money would have to be found. By the same token, if paving Utah were the only way to defend the country, then obviously Utah would have to go. But when the SALT II treaty collapsed in the Senate, the rationale for "land-mobile" basing collapsed with it.

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Four thousand six hundred shelters, always a somewhat mystical figure to the public, had been arrived at by means of an elaborate calculation of how many targets the Soviets might hit if they fired all the ICBMs allowed them under SALT II. It turned out that 4,600 targets would be more than the Soviets could handle, so, assuming the deception phase of the "shell game" worked (that is, that the Soviets didn't know *which* shelters to shoot at), 4,600 shelters insured that many MX missiles would "survive" even an all-out strike. But with SALT II gone, nothing would prevent the Soviets from overwhelming a racetrack MX by sheer force of numbers.

"Soft kill," in which most of the money is spent on accessories rather than weapons, was the villain here. By building an extra ICBM with a ten-warhead MIRV, the Soviets might expect to destroy up to five MX shelters (missile strategists plan two warheads per target to include margin for error). But the extra ICBM would cost the Soviets a great deal less to construct than the five MX shelters and their attendant racetrack, carriers, dummy missiles, and so on—the "soft" part of the system. Without SALT II the racetrack design meant swimming upstream; it could be countered more cheaply than it could be built.

Of course the same grim logic applied to the Soviets. If they attempted to build a mobile ICBM system in a non-SALT world, we could counter it much more cheaply than they could put it up. All these "counterforce" arguments assumed, of course, that somebody would be willing to risk a first strike. Leaving aside the many inconclusive arguments about this question (for instance, even a 100-percent-successful first strike on Minuteman and Titan ICBMs would destroy only one quarter of the U.S. nuclear arsenal), "counterforce" thinking also assumed something else—that the attacking missiles would work. As time went along, this looked like a bigger and bigger assumption. While both U.S. and Soviet ICBMs were improving, they were not achieving the long-predicted killer accuracy necessary to make them a threat to the 50-foot concrete slab of a reinforced missile silo.

No U.S. or Soviet ICBM has *ever* been tested along the actual route it would fly in wartime, north-south across the pole. All missile testing by both countries is done east-west, over the Pacific, and then the results are "projected" for polar flight. The problem here is obvious—to test a missile on its actual wartime route, the Soviets would have to fire it into the U.S., and vice versa. But, as several recent press reports have made clear, missile accuracy can be perfected only by tests along the actual route to be employed. Local variations in gravity, magnetism and upper-atmosphere weather (factors collectively known as "bias") cannot be compensated for unless they are test-mapped. Missiles flying without benefit of bias "maps" can still be very accurate—accurate enough to destroy something as small as an air base or factory—but

Satellite Tomorrow, Comedy Tonight

Through the 1950s the Army, Navy, and Air Force all pursued various big-missile projects, hoping to win the ICBM "mission." A feeling developed that the first service to orbit a satellite (this was in the days before NASA) would sew up the job.

The Air Force hit on a brilliant ploy. It got the Navy designated as "lead service" for a satellite launch; Navy designers thus concentrated on a scientific-type, rather than military, project. The Army was told to let the Navy go first. It could not get clearance to fire its satellite rocket, which was almost ready. The Air Force used this bought time to rally support for the idea that it was the "logical" ICBM service.

Unfortunately, interservice infighting gave the Soviets (who had a single agency devoted to rocketry) time to launch Sputnik. The Navy's Vanguard satellite rocket was a spectacular flop—it's the one often shown in newsreels, crumbling and exploding on the pad. But even after Sputnik the Army could not get permission to fire. Another Vanguard fell in pieces, to much fanfare, and three months passed before clearance was finally granted. Shortly afterward the Army orbited Explorer I on its first try.

Not that this helped the Army any. By that time (1958) the Air Force had locked up long-term funding for ICBMs. After recording the most important U.S. space success of the decade, the Army was ordered out of the missile business.

—*G.E.*

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they probably can't be relied on to hit missile silos.

Recently *Strategic Review*, a hard-line military journal, got this information the closest it has been to official print. "Nothing has been put forward which technologically supports the belief that we (or the Soviets) could, with any degree of confidence, expect to hit one silo at ICBM range, let alone 1,000 of them distributed over an area equal to one-third of the United States," *Strategic Review*'s editorial said.

So the two underlying assumptions of the mobile MX had begun to crumble. Total Soviet ICBMs and warheads were not going to be held down by SALT II. But perhaps the Air Force had fallen for its own hype, and Soviet missiles were not accurate enough to destroy fixed silos anyway. This seemed to suggest it was time to change the MX plan. The Air Force thought so, too. Time to make it more complicated and more expensive.

Big Bird and Other Cartoon Characters

When Reagan took office, he was well disdisposed to new strategic weapons but upset over the racetrack scheme's land-grab provisions. So, the Air Force began to wonder, how can we keep the mobile-basing idea alive, but make it take up less space? About that time a much more important event rocked the Pentagon—Reagan's budget projections for defense were announced. The Navy reigned as number-one service with 38 percent of the budget. On tap were more supercarriers, more Tridents, battleships with cruise missiles—the Navy's entire Christmas list had won administration approval. But Air Force top-shelf projects, the MX and the B-1 bomber, were shunted off to the limbo-land of "further study." The Army didn't get much to speak of, either.

Thomas N. Bethell and Gregg Easterbrook have won an Investigative Reporters and Editors Award for magazine reporting for the special section, "Psst—The Energy Crisis Is Over," which appeared in our October 1980 issue. IRE is a journalists' professional organization best known for its investigation of the Don Bolles murder in Arizona. Other IRE award winners in the same category were Mark Dowie of *Mother Jones* and Jeanne Kasindorf of *New West* (now called *California*).

Suddenly the Army and Air Force, former nuclear rivals, looked each other deeply in the eye. Strings swelled in the background, autumn leaves fell to the ground in slow motion, and the services said to each other, "Where have you been all my life?" An ad hoc Army-Air Force alliance was formed. The two services would cooperate, through private administration contacts and votes in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to oppose further Navy budget increases. They would also form a united front insisting on MX. And as a little token of affection, the Air Force would put the Army back into the ABM business.

At once word was leaked that what MX really needed was an ABM (now called a BMD, or "ballistic missile defense," to remove the ABM stigma). An Army-run ABM would enable the MX layout to shrink, since the presence of a defensive missile would compensate for a reduced target area. All manner of ABM proposals began circulating at the Pentagon, everything from anti-missile "space cruisers" to a land-mobile, "shell game" ABM that would be shuttled around just like MX. Never mind that MX had been designed in its dizzyingly complex way specifically to avoid the need for an ABM; politics, not military considerations, was driving the new alliance. One Air Force general called the MX-ABM plan "an ideal marriage," neglecting to mention that the Navy was holding a shotgun to the groom's back.

MX-ABM advanced when administration officials said Reagan might be willing to let the 1972 ABM treaty with Russia expire. (Nixon had originally signed the treaty in no small part because of its enthusiastic Air Force backing.) Of course, most ABM schemes still had the same minor defect that caused occasional misgivings over Safeguard—they involved shooting a nuclear bomb into the path of a nuclear bomb. Setting off nuclear bombs over your own territory seemed, well, a flawed concept. But MX-ABM might finally bring the Air Force's land-mobile dream to reality and give the Army a super-sophisticated nuclear-tipped missile, something it has longed for since its Nike and Jupiter missiles lost out to Air Force competitors in the 1950s.

Then Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger threw the entire MX project into a power dive when he revived the "flying submarine" idea. Weinberger wanted to put the new missile into the air, getting rid of MX bases altogether. His plan called for a fleet of new airplanes operating from a combination of old and new airfields. The

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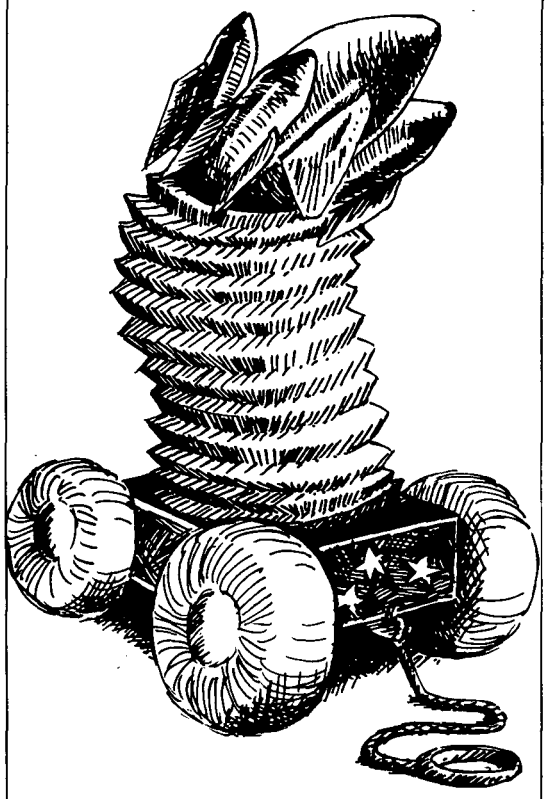
Project MZ would emphasize a reliable new missile design attuned to real-world combat conditions.



planes would be an ultra-efficient new design nicknamed "Big Bird," able to stay aloft for long periods—maybe two days—without refueling or wearing themselves out. Thus some Big Birds would "always be in the air," their whereabouts unknown to Soviet targeters.

Big Birds had the same failings as the old flying subs. They would be difficult to communicate with, especially during the electromagnetic "pulse" many scientists believed would fuzz out radio transmissions nationwide if even a few Soviet warheads were exploded in the air. Missiles from Big Birds, considering their "soft" air-dropped launch, would also be hard to direct. In fact they would have to rely on radio guidance from satellites or ground stations, guidance that would probably be knocked out by the pulse.

So there were valid military reasons to oppose Big Bird. Then there were the reasons that mattered to the Air Force.

It would seem, on first inspection, that Big Bird would have appealed to the Air Force brass. After all, it would provide them with many new airplanes and bases, in addition to their long-sought new missile. But Air Force reaction was hysterical: the generals moved swiftly to plant every anti-Big Bird story they could, and helped arrange for their trained seal, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Tower, to appear before Reagan and warn that Big Bird could never be approved on the Hill.

What was at work was an *intra*service rivalry within the Air Force itself. The Air Force generally splits into three factions: bomber advocates, missile advocates, and "tac air" advocates who are interested in fighters and related planes. Missile advocates thought they had the bomber group on the run when the B-1 was canceled; it looked as if their argument, that lumbering manned bombers are a throwback to Billy Mitchell, had carried the day. But then the bomber faction rallied with its Stealth project and, almost miraculously, whipped up strong congressional support for a reincarnation of the B-1 (now called the "B-1B" to make it sound like something new).

This Big Bird, the missile mavens thought, sounds suspiciously like a bomber. Sure, it would carry an ICBM and never venture far from U.S. air space, but the main part of the project would be an airplane, and that would mean involving pilots, mechanics, flight planners, and others from the bomber hierarchy.

But what finally united all Air Force factions in a primal scream of righteous indignation was the revelation of how Big Bird would look. In order to use little fuel and stay airborne for long periods, it would be powered by *propeller engines*. Propellers, scourges of the sky. Air Force engineers thought they had tossed propellers onto the scrap heap of history along with dirigibles and aviator goggles. Big Bird's top speed, for fuel conservation reasons, would be 150 m.p.h. *One hundred and fifty*. Some *cars* do better! Weinberger was proposing that the Air Force defend the country with a giant Piper Cub! *Intra*service rivalries were temporarily set aside when this affront to the whole nature of aerial dignity was revealed.

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The MZ Alternative

Next came the "scaled-down" MX. Its origin is generally traced to the Townes Commission, a blue-ribbon panel of scientists and military analysts Reagan appointed to advise him on missile matters.

Scaled-down MX called for 100 missiles shuttled among 1,000 shelters or silos. Whether to use shelters (as with the original racetrack plan) or silos (as with Minuteman) had become a point of debate. One of MX's most annoying engineering weaknesses, usually overlooked in the exhausting process of reciting the system's problems, was that shelters would be more vulnerable to attack than silos. Horizontal shelters would be partially above ground, not buried, with their entire length exposed instead of just one end; they could probably withstand only 600 pounds per square inch of blast pressure; while silos can be made to endure 3,000 psi. In a sense, if shelters were used, the MX planners' prophecy of first-strike threats could be self-fulfilling: instead of Soviet ICBMs becoming more accurate, U.S. missiles would be destroyed by warheads landing further away.

A scaled-down MX using silos, meanwhile, offered more security but reduced mobility. It would be complicated and time-consuming to hoist missiles up and out of silos, instead of just rolling them in and out of shelters. And either way the scaled-down MX was housed, the soft-kill dilemma remained—almost all the money would be spent on auxiliary facilities instead of weapons.

Are there *any* proposals left over that could provide a new missile without a lot of money spent for nothing? Yes, there could be another option, one I will christen the "MZ" missile.

MZ would entail a new, improved ICBM (bigger than Minuteman, if the Desktop Lobby insists) installed in existing Minuteman silos. (Many Minuteman silos are larger than the missiles they accommodate, or could be modified for larger missiles in other ways.) Project MZ would emphasize a reliable missile design attuned to real-world combat conditions; its main benefit would be to replace older Minutemen, missiles of questionable reliability, with a more dependable weapon. Congress could insure that reliability, not magnificence, would be MZ's outstanding feature by specifying that all MZ testing, after the first few prototypes, be done from operational silos.

Naturally MZ would cost a fraction of what even a scaled-down MX would cost, freeing up funds for other military or social needs. One important military need the money might cover is small missile-firing submarines that could prowl the U.S. coasts. (For more on the small-sub proposal, see "Sighted S.U.M., Sank Same," by Bill Keller, *The Washington Monthly*, May 1980.) Small submarines would compliment the ponderous Trident fleet, providing large numbers of very hard to find targets. Tridents may

The Washington Monthly Journalism Award

July 1981

is presented to

William Lambrecht

Illinois Issues

In the first of a two-part series in this monthly journal covering Illinois government, Lambrecht, Springfield correspondent for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, examined the power and performance of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Lambrecht described the authority the commission wields over all energy, transportation, and communications in the state. He explained how conflicting forces at work in complicated rate cases—particularly in utilities cases—have sometimes overwhelmed the commission's members. Articles of this kind are especially valuable because they shed light on activity at the state level that often goes uncovered in the press.

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turn out to be good submarines, but they are so expensive only a few will be built; the current plan calls for just 12. Small submarines would have the same weaknesses as Big Birds—they might be hard to communicate with in time of war, and their radio-guided missiles might be susceptible to pulse disruption. But they would be truly "invulnerable," even harder to find than Tridents. So cover-all-bases strategy dictates that security will be found in a continued mix of land and sea missiles—Minutemen and MZs because they are accurate and easy to communicate with, Trident and small-sub missiles because they cannot be caught in a first strike.

MZ is the idea endorsed (although not under that name) by *Strategic Review*, whose editorial board includes many retired generals and admirals. It's not too late to build support for the plan, especially if the scaled-down MX, like its forerunners, falls under the weight of its own costs and assumptions.

But wait a minute—wouldn't MZ, by using existing silos, continue to run the risk of destruction by a Soviet first strike? No more so than scaled-down MX. By presenting Soviet targeters with 1,000 shelters or silos to shoot at, scaled-down MX offers nothing more challenging than Minuteman's 1,000 targets. Considering only 100 of scaled-down MX's 1,000 shelters or silos would be loaded, the system might be a great deal *more* vulnerable than Minuteman—since if the Soviets discovered any way to determine the location of even some of the missiles, they would then have to destroy *fewer* than the present 1,000 targets.

Pentagon planners can advance the scaled-down MX scheme because they know full well that Soviet ICBMs are not reliable enough to deal a devastating blow to 1,000 silos, and will not be for a long time to come. If they are not, MX is not needed at all. MZ will do fine, and will be available sooner.

With Services Like These . . .

That last bit of evidence—that MX went through the mill and came out looking as though its sponsors had forgotten the reason it was supposed to be needed in the first place—is by far the most troubling. It's proof that MX has been a game all along, a game of interservice rivalries, high-technology addiction, and budget politics. National defense has played at best a minor role in the affair.

Military philosophers like to say that service branches exist only to *prepare* for war, training troops and building equipment. Once war begins it will clear everyone's mind of petty interservice jealousies. "Unified" commanders will be appointed, and all services will rally 'round them.

It's hard to understand how highly trained officers can bear participating in this fractured-flickers system, either from the standpoint of their own self-respect, or the oaths they took to defend their fellow citizens. They are furiously making preparations they know full well to be too expensive, too cumbersome, or worst of all just plain no good—and relying on the horror of war to sweep it all away.

That did happen in the last war we won. When it began, U.S. armed forces were stuck with any number of devices that didn't work (like tanks whose cannon pointed sideways) and strategies blind to real-world conditions (like reliance on battleships). Foolish ideas were beaten back by the sheer urgency of events, the services cooperated, and disaster was avoided. But the cobweb-clearing effect of war did not work as well in Korea, and it failed utterly in Vietnam—perhaps because there are now three major services instead of two (the Air Force was part of the Army in World War II), perhaps because Pentagon bureaucracy is now so much more elaborate and self-serving (there is a command structure whose sole purpose is to monitor the Cuban "combat brigade").

World conditions, as well as Pentagon hierarchies, are different now in other ways. When World War II began, there was time to effect change—years, in fact, to revise policies and rebuild arms before the major invasion campaigns were launched. In the next war there may be no such luxuries. Long-range, fast-moving weapons will not wait for the minutes of Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings to be typed.

Armed service leadership may be burdened by its share of fops and fools, but there is another faction present. Most officers (and civilian defense officials) continue to be sincere, public-spirited people who value peace and country above their positions on the organizational chart. Unfortunately, it is a rule that in bureaucracies bad drives out good; members of the Pentagon's public-spirited faction have had a very hard time of it lately. But if they are encouraged by the public, the press, and the administration, they may be able to prevail in the military reform so desperately needed. Sensible machines and policies must be in place *before* the next round of fighting begins—that is our best hope to prevent more war, and our only hope to survive it. □

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FEATHERBEDDING IN THE TOWER

How the Controllers Let the Cat Out of the Bag

by Jonathan Alter

Secure your tray tables and bring your seat-backs to their full upright position because we're beginning our descent into a point about the air traffic controllers' strike that you haven't read yet. The strike provides proof—that's, right, *proof*—that the government is as badly featherbedded as we've feared.

Sure, Americans have long suspected it. After all, the voters just elected a president who first prospered in politics largely on the strength of banquet jokes about lazy bureaucrats. And this magazine has tossed in its own examples. We've reported on the 700-person staff of the U.S. embassy in London that is twice what this country maintained 35 years ago when Great Britain still ruled an empire, and we've cited the case of Ellis O. Briggs, the late ambassador to Czechoslovakia, who noted that after the Czechs got mad and sent two-thirds of his staff home the embassy operated more efficiently than ever. We've explained how the District of Columbia government accidentally discovered its trash collection teams performed more efficiently when manned by three workers instead of four.

But those are just suspicious indications, like the feeling you get when you walk into a government office and the first secretary you see is giving herself a manicure. None of these examples constitutes proof. The reason it's so hard to nail down featherbedding lies in the nature of most government jobs. Almost all bureaucrats do something of some sort during the day, and most have figured out how to make it sound at least vaguely plausible. Determining which of those activities *are* plausible means distinguishing "productivity" from the morass of memos and meetings that make up most government occupations. And doing that requires lots of, well, work—the kind of evaluative effort most government agencies avoid.

So the problem is how to prove too many people are performing a particular task if you can't figure out what that task is in the first place. "Systems management," "public liaison," and "program analysis" are not quantifiable. This doesn't mean white-collar jobs can't be consolidated (and it doesn't excuse the Reagan budget-cutters who went after programs rather than the bureaucrats who administer them). But it does help explain the reason it's so hard to do something about a problem everyone recognizes.

Given that, the controllers' strike is a godsend. In exchange for a choice of 24 flights a day to Cleveland we have a chance to learn something important about why our government is so bloated. The proof of the featherbedding is this: Before the strike, 19,000 controllers and supervisors handled air traffic. After the strike began, 9,000—or fewer than half as many people—handled 75 percent of the normal traffic. Even taking into account substitute controllers' 48-

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Four weeks, this is a sure sign of how overstaffed many towers and "en route" centers were before the strike. Perhaps such efficiency comes at the expense of air safety, as PATCO claims, but so far there is no evidence of it. Separation between aircraft in flight has been extended, and the pilots—the ones with their lives on the line—are generally happy. Many pilots say the skies are even safer now.

So there it is, a crystalline illustration of a government bigger than it needs to be. As you've read in the papers, the controllers' union made plenty of mistakes: It underestimated the willingness of the Reagan administration to hang tough, it overestimated the willingness of other unions to get involved, and it misjudged the willingness of the public to support an across-the-board $10,000 raise for workers averaging $33,000 a year. But most of all PATCO forgot its own best argument for special treatment. It forgot that controlling air traffic really *is* different from other kinds of work in the federal government. PATCO's claims, unlike those of other government unions, could be tested against the truth.

Peak Hour Peekaboo

Nobody's shedding many tears for PATCO these days, and with good reason. Even the *Village Voice,* hardly a union-busting rag, ran an article critical of its demands. Ditto *Federal Times,* the bureaucrat's bible, whose editorial entitled "Suicidal and Dumb" pointed out that the controllers wanted a top salary of $60,000 a year—$10,000 a year more than the top-ranking civil servant. Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), disembarked from a flight recently and told *The New York Times* he wanted to lend support to the strike but that he could never really get himself to feel enough sympathy to go at it wholeheartedly. The AFL-CIO backed up a lot of tough talk about Reagan and "yellow dog" contracts with exactly zip action. Its machinists and airline clerks all stayed on the job.

Reagan overreacted; there was no need to seek jail sentences for the striking controllers. The photographs of the Virginia PATCO leader being led away in chains generated the only real public sympathy for the union, and it detracted from the basic rightness of the administration's position. Instead of just claiming PATCO members had violated the law, Reagan might have taken the time to educate the public a bit about why public employees don't have the right to strike. The reasons go beyond concern for keeping essential government services running smoothly. There is also the matter of job security and generous pension benefits. The deal is, you get these goodies if you agree not to strike. Government workers are not expected to refrain from striking because of patriotism (although that would be nice), but because they are well paid and can't be fired (unless, obviously, they strike). Last year, an angry Florida controller directed a jetliner into a thunderstorm to protest a particular policy, endangering hundreds of people. The FAA couldn't get more than a brief suspension. According to a *Wall Street Journal* report in 1980, three controllers caught sleeping on duty got off with reprimands. The fact is that until August, air traffic controllers, like other federal employees, were practically fire-proof.

Layoff-proof, too. In 1978, the aviation subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee investigated FAA staffing standards and found they were inflated and "lacked credibility." What had happened was a kind of overcompensation for earlier transgressions against controllers. In the 1950s and 1960s, controllers' work conditions and pay were lousy, and air traffic growth far outstripped expansion of their ranks. But by the early 1970s the FAA had automated air traffic control and, under pressure from PATCO (founded in 1968 with the help of F. Lee Bailey), improved wages and benefits dramatically.

(continued)

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The House investigation discovered that in the process of making itself more humane, the FAA had developed knuckleheaded staffing standards. Incredibly, it wasn't until 1974 that the agency realized that because traffic was lighter on weekends, fewer controllers were needed then. And the FAA was still wedded to "peak-hour staffing," which was figured by running a complex regression analysis based on traffic levels for the 34th busiest day of the year. Not the 79th busiest or the 182nd. The 34th. What controllers were supposed to do at the hours when traffic was running as it did on the 331 other days of the year went unexplained.

In fact, the "34th busiest day" staffing levels were in effect right up until the strike began, at which point the FAA flattened out the rush-hour peaks through "flow control" (holding some flights in departure gates or canceling them altogether). Even at the FAA, nobody dreamed how well this strike plan would work. The big airlines now have the chance to trim back unneeded employees and flights that were leaving half empty. The smaller commuter airlines are making money hand over fist because many leave from small airports virtually unaffected by the strike. Hotel companies say they suffered only for the first few days of the strike and are now back to normal. The pilots believe flying is safer now that rush hour has been cut back. And the flying public is not displaying undue signs of being inconvenienced. Has that obnoxious neighbor cornered you recently at a party with one of those interminable stories about being hung up for four hours in an airport? I doubt it.

This doesn't mean rush hour should be eliminated entirely when the system has been fully rebuilt, but there's no reason to go back to the dangerous traffic loads of the pre-strike years, and certainly no reason to return to a plan that staffs for peaks throughout the day. It's difficult to understand why the government decided to staff that way in the first place. What would have been so hard about staffing for normal traffic and adding on—through shift overlap or part-time help—during the hours of the day when the going got rough?

The answer to that question, not surprisingly, has something to do with PATCO. Last year the FAA, under Carter-appointed Administrator Langhorne Bond, agreed to the House staff investigation's recommendation and planned to cut about 600 controllers. Bond, a knowledgeable and tough-minded administrator, had already accomplished the nearly impossible feat of eliminating 500 useless jobs from the FAA's Washington headquarters. He looked forward to cutting the controllers down to size. If the principle of peak-hour staffing couldn't be changed, at least the overall numbers might be reduced—a little, anyway.

But PATCO knew how to give that plan the go-around command. Instead of arguing that staffing levels were adequate and not in need of cutting, the union started protesting there weren't *enough* controllers—and that the new automated equipment made the controller's job tougher, not easier. For those in the know about air traffic systems, this didn't ring true. Before the 1970s, relevant information about the status of an airplane (altitude, flight number, and so on) had to be taken down by the controller by hand and elaborately recorded on a small plastic marker called a "shrimp boat." Now it is all printed electronically on a screen, and if the computer blinks out once in awhile (usually for no more than a few seconds), the answer is to fix the computer—not add more controllers.

None of this meant that Congress and the public couldn't be told the number of controllers was critical. So it was that PATCO joined forces with organizations representing private airplane owners, who always want more publicly paid controllers to tend to their personal needs. Together they convinced the Appropriations Committee to back off. "Congressmen fly a lot, and they're basically afraid to cut controllers," says Thomas Kingfield, staff director of the House subcommittee. "PATCO knew it could use the safety issue."

If overstaffing occurs in an area where we don't really expect it, imagine how bad it is in government offices where we do expect it.

In the end, Congress eliminated only about 100 slots, which still left the union angry. What no one could know at the time was that events would soon prove the number of cuts could safely have been not five or six times greater, as the House staff and the FAA wanted, but *30 or 40* times greater. Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis, who knows featherbedding when he sees it, suggested not long after the strike began that when the government finishes rebuilding the system and air traffic returns to normal, 3,000 to

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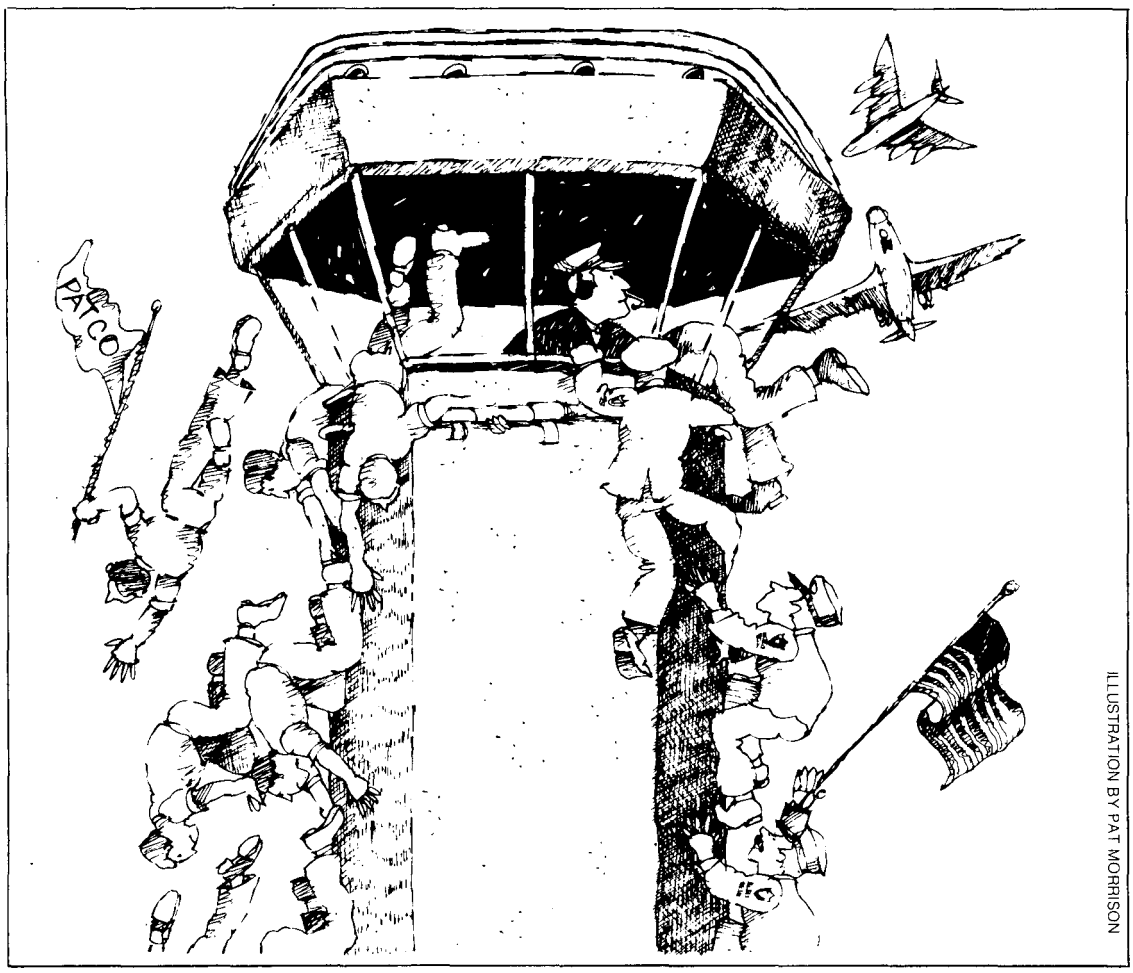

ILLUSTRATION BY PAT MORRISON

4,000 fewer controllers will be on the job. (More than 100,000 people have already applied for the 6,000 or so open positions.)

And as if it weren't in enough trouble already, PATCO has labor problems in its own ranks. It seems that several former PATCO employees—people who worked for the union itself—have filed suit charging their dismissal last year from the union constituted an unfair labor practice. No, PATCO replied in a hearing before the National Labor Relations Board, there was nothing unfair about the firings. The union was simply undertaking a little, well, "consolidation."

Oshkosh, B' Gosh

The one enduring mystery in the controllers' strike is why, if their demands are laughable, have so many controllers stuck with them so long? What made them "drink the Kool-Aid," as one nonstriking controller in Memphis put it? The answer grows out of the same fact that makes their featherbedding so evident. Unlike many federal employees, controllers actually do something tangible, important, and sometimes nerve-racking. They can't be blamed for feeling a little resentful when they visit FAA headquarters and see those GS-14 "priorities analysts" and "program facilitators" rushing from one useless meeting to another. While the controller is on the firing line, some equally well paid government employee is busy butchering the English language.

But before getting too weepy about it, let's remember that everything you've heard about stress and burnout isn't really at issue in this strike. If it had been, PATCO would have bargained over conditions only at the nation's busiest towers and en-route centers—where pay is higher but stress does occur—and accepted the fact that life was pretty damn good for the bulk of controllers working medium-size and small facilities. At the largest airports, rush-hour traffic has been reduced by as much as 50

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percent, but at most airports around the country, planes are coming in and out at better than 80 percent of pre-strike levels, with many fewer controllers manning the towers. They didn't need a 32-hour week out at the well-equipped but sleepy Oshkosh, Wisconsin airport, and they didn't need a flat $10,000 raise or improvements in an already generous early-retirement program.

You may recall an observation once made in these pages that during the Christmas season, absenteeism in the government as a whole often reaches as high as 60 percent and no one in the rest of the country notices any difference in services provided. It turns out something similar holds true even at a high-pressure air traffic center. Leesburg, Virginia, is a very busy en-route center for monitoring traffic along the Eastern seaboard, and it is especially busy during the last couple of weeks in December. But a couple of Christmases ago, long before the strike, the work of 18 controllers in Leesburg was handled by 11 people. The rest, according to *The Washington Star,* were on vacation. An exceptionally busy time of year, a potential for bad weather, a worse-than-34th-day if there ever was one—and the center ran with 60 percent of normal staff! What do you suppose those 18 people were doing on a slow afternoon in May?

If a recent GAO report is any indication, at least half the time they weren't controlling traffic. The average time spent actually on the boards at the three very busy facilities studied was about four hours a day. The rest of the time, depending on the facility, controllers "review new procedures," receive training to allow them to move up, or train others. In other words, air traffic controllers are not so different from ambulance paramedics or firemen. They've been through 22 weeks of government-paid basic instruction (no college degree required), they perform a sometimes chilling and difficult job not everyone can handle, and they essentially work on call. The difference is that after five years paramedics and firemen usually get $15,000 to $25,000, and air traffic controllers $30,000 to $50,000. Has an air traffic controller ever burned to death on duty? Who deserves the raise?

A Double Featherbed

All right, enough picking on PATCO. Why beat a dead horse? Besides, many of the most highly paid superfluous bodies in the tower were *supervisors,* whose allegiance is to the FAA and not the union. In fact, as PATCO has pointed out, nearly three times as many supervisors were added to the payroll in the late 1970s as controllers. Not surprisingly, this second-echelon featherbedding has been conveniently overlooked during the strike. That's because every pre-strike featherbed supervisor is now the only thing standing between you and a long Greyhound ride to wherever you want to go.

But if the presence of supervisors in the towers and centers is guaranteed to annoy the striking controllers, what must bother them even more is the presence of the substitute controllers from the military. To understand why that's so, you have to recall what controllers think of pilots. As former assistant FAA administrator Jerome Doolittle points out, controllers essentially view pilots as little more than flying versions of themselves, and, in the aggrieved Rodney Dangerfield view of the world they've constructed, that's unfair—pilots make lots more money. (Of course, no tower has ever crashed.) Here's where the military controllers come in. When commercial pilots are viewed in military terms they equate to officers. They have uniforms and wings, and many are in fact former military pilots (the pilot is called "the captain"). When controllers are viewed in military terms, they come out looking like *enlisted men.*

The proof of featherbedding is this: Before the strike, 19,000 controllers and supervisors handled air traffic. After the strike began, 9,000 handled 75 percent of normal traffic.

That the controllers really have no status and, to their minds, no respect was driven home not so much by the union decertification process or by the tide of public opinion as by the fact that the people who helped replace the striking controllers are Air Force, Army, and Navy non-commissioned officers. After working eight years practicing the same skills as those possessed by civilian controllers (they both must take the same tests), a military controller makes an average of $15,500, or less than half of what most FAA controllers think is such rotten pay. Yet there were the sergeants up in the towers, within sight of the picket lines, doing just fine.

Seeing that must be painful for the strikers—

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about as painful as it must have been for the military enlistees to have spent all those years watching their civilian counterparts bellyaching about what they could only dream of (controllers' jobs were scarce). As the successful substitution began, about the only thing the PATCO controllers had to be thankful for was that virtually no one in the press seemed to understand the significance of the fact that these highly trained, highly paid members of the *Professional* Air Traffic Controllers Organization were being replaced in part by unspectacular, low-paid military enlistees, many of whom will now leave the service and try to sign on for the big bucks as civilians in the suddenly open positions.

Has the military had to cancel any flights or jeopardize safety after turning over 818 (or about one-tenth) of its controllers to the FAA? Of course not. The military's featherbedding makes the FAA look as lean and efficient as a championship gymnastics team. Take the Air Force. In 1969, when fuel was cheap and the Air Force was less far along in its preference for overcomplex aircraft that spend much of their time in the shop, Air Force pilots flew 8.7 million hours. Their traffic was handled by about 6,500 controllers. Last year, total flying hours were down to 3.2 million (about what they've been for most of the 1970s), but how many Air Force controllers, benefiting from new automated equipment, would you think control the lighter traffic? Three thousand? Twenty-five hundred? Try 5,500—only a thousand fewer than once handled more than two and a half times as many hours of traffic! It's no wonder the Air Force could spare so many controllers for the FAA.

Ice Feathers

You might think it's a little unfair to single out air traffic controllers to make this point about featherbedding, and, in a way, you're right. While it's indisputable that there have been too many controllers, it's also clear that for short, intensive periods, at least, they work harder than most other government employees. It's exactly this point that makes their featherbedding so significant. If overstaffing occurs in an area where we didn't really expect it, where the union had convinced a lot of people the workplace was *under*staffed—then imagine how bad the featherbedding is in government offices where we *do* expect it. This latter category, most are likely to agree, includes the majority of federal, state, and local agencies. The wastefulness of peak-period staffing may be especially clear in the case of controllers, but it is the rule in the rest of the government, too. Offices are staffed for when they're busiest—when they have to get a report out or a project completed—and then they are left that way when the actual workload slips into low gear or out of sight entirely.

So at last we've found the tip of the iceberg that many of us guessed was there all the time. We no longer have to imagine this problem through some haze of suspicion; now we have a way of touching and proving it. What lies below the surface is still hard to measure, but at least we finally know it exists—waiting to be chipped away. □

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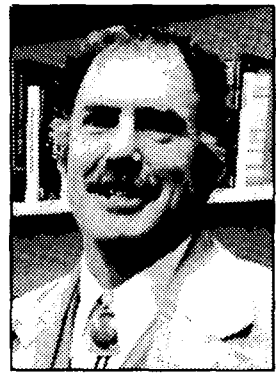
For everyone who asks, "Suppose Reagan is wrong?", a message of challenge and hope from an economist with a vision of the future to replace the politics of nostalgia.



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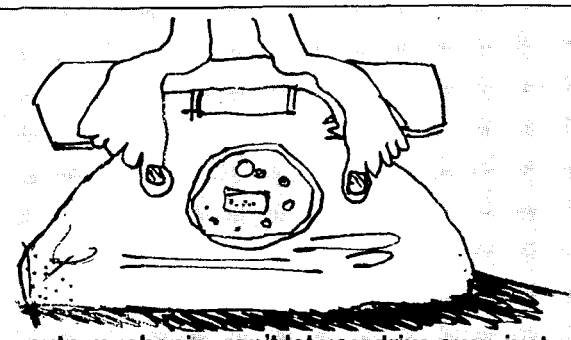
Tidbits & Outrages

. . . and then there's the safety net for the truly

Beyond the Twinkie Defense: Your Honor, I Thought She Was a Two-toed Tree Sloth

In New York State, a man out hunting said he shot his wife because he mistook her for a woodchuck. Emanuel Florio told police he caught a glimpse of his wife's head, thought it looked like a woodchuck, and fired.

In Virginia Beach, Virginia, Orvall Wyatt Loyd, a mechanic, told police he had mistaken his mother-in-law for a large raccoon when he hacked her to death in her garage. Loyd said he struck the woman once with a hatchet, realized it was his wife's mother, but struck her again anyway. "I snapped or something," Loyd explained.



And the auto mechanic won't let you drive over, just crawl.

The Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company does not make it possible for you to phone a Phone Store. Though there are phone numbers listed in the book, a call brings only a recording. "All Phone Center orders are taken on a walk-in basis only," a C&P official said.

At least the rats won't die of cancer.

Boxes of D-Con brand rat poison boast in large letters "An exclusive blend of all-natural ingredients."

In Episode 169, Opie takes a nap.

Richard Kelly, a professor of English and director of graduate studies in English at the University of Tennessee, has written a new book called *The Andy Griffith Show*. In addition to examining the "artistic merits" of "Mayberry's sheriff without a gun," the book includes a list and summary of all 249 episodes of the long-running television show.

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This ad appeared in the August 27, 1981 *San Diego Union:*

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by Robert M. Kaus

It's March 1981, two months into his second term, and Gary Hart, senior senator from Colorado, is meeting with the League of Women Voters in his Denver office, a converted home on a quiet suburban street. The red-cheeked ladies who have come to grill him chuckle nervously awaiting his arrival. Hart enters and sits down. He is casually dressed in a camel's-hair sportcoat and flared slacks. He is also, they can't help but notice, extremely handsome. A little stiffly, the ladies take out their "issues checklists" and, pencils poised, start the questioning.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIANA WALKER

What is the senator's position on nuclear waste? Hart recounts the floor fight he had with Senator Bennett Johnston of Louisiana, who opposed a Hart proposal that would have set a deadline for a final decision on a method of nuclear waste disposal. Hart's answer is candid. "The problem Senator Johnston has," he explains, "is that this inevitably leads you to one place, the salt domes of Louisiana."

The budget follows nuclear waste on the checklist. Leaning back his chair, Hart attempts to clarify the arcane budget "reconciliation" process—then gives up, admitting he hasn't been very clear. As the women run further down their checklists, Hart is sometimes precise ("I opposed state revenue-sharing but supported local revenue-sharing"), sometimes openly vague (he is "generally supportive" of affirmative action), sometimes sweeping ("If you approach welfare piecemeal, you won't get it done. We ought to have massive welfare reform"), sometimes a bit academic ("There are four possible ways to reform the welfare system"). In response to one query he says, "I haven't decided." At another point he admits, "I have never completely understood the CETA program."

Thirty minutes into the interview, the conversation has lost its confrontational tone. The women are warming up to Hart, impressed by his matter-of-fact conviction. Clearly he has thought about the issues they are raising, and he takes his answers seriously. When Hart ends one of his responses by noting, "With authority comes responsibility," one of the ladies can hold back no longer.

"Senator," she asks, blushing, "are they *all* as responsible as you?"

Some time soon, Gary Hart must decide whether he wants to be president. The press and Hart's fellow politicians have already made the decision for him. When Hart, who had no previous military record, joined the Naval Reserve earlier this year, columnists Evans and

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Should This Man Be President?

Novak announced he was "clearing his biographical decks for 1984." They added that Hart had become "the winter-book favorite of the politicians" for the Democratic nomination. When Hart reorganized his staff, creating a separate branch to deal with "national issues," the buzzing grew louder. Democratic Party Chairman Charles Manatt now makes a habit of dropping Hart's name, along with Kennedy's and Mondale's, as a 1984 possibility. And the surest sign of presidential timberhood—an invitation to join the Trilateral Commission—came this year.

Hart's friends say he is not certain he wants to make the well-known personal sacrifices a presidential campaign requires. They remember that on the night of his reelection to the Senate last November, when his supporters started chanting "Eighty-four! Eighty-four!," Hart looked genuinely pained. At other times, however, he seems almost eager, and the question appears to be not if but when. "Fritz and Ted should have their run at it," he will say. This is followed immediately by a pointed comparison of Mondale with Edmund Muskie, the 1972 front runner whom Hart, as George McGovern's campaign manager, helped beat. Then, without a trace of false modesty, Hart will start talking of a "new generation" of Democratic politicians waiting in the wings should the familiar names stumble.

The conventional factors that make Hart an appealing presidential prospect are easy to tick off. He is young (44), attractive, and intelligent. He has a reputation for being a "good senator." As a surviving Democrat from a western state, he holds out the possibility of breaking the "Republican lock" on the boom territory guarded by the Rockies.

But there is a more important reason why Hart has appeal. In a period when even the most cliche-ridden Democrats are calling for unspecified "new ideas" with which to rescue the party, Hart is that rare politician who has actually discovered some. As long ago as 1973 Hart was saying things that have become bywords today—about the "end of the New Deal," about the need to stop reflexively attacking social ills with "agencies that become self-sustaining enti-

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ties whether or not the problem is solved." That makes Hart the prototype of the "neo-liberal," a term Hart himself doesn't use, but that will still do for describing the emerging group of Democrats who maintain allegiance to traditional, compassionate liberal goals while rejecting the mechanisms (generally involving expansion of government) that traditional liberals rely on. Sometimes neo-liberalism degenerates into the bland middle-of-the-roadism of a Dale Bumpers or a Joseph Biden, avoiding the stock positions of right and left by taking an equally stock position halfway between them. At best, neo-liberals search for what Hart calls "third positions," new ways of looking at issues that suggest entirely new political initiatives. On Hart's staff, this is called "turning an issue on its side." It is the senator's obsession.

Hart has already succeeded in one area—national defense—where he has staked out a provocative yet sensible position unburdened by the automatic assumptions of either left or right. Oversimplifying a little (but not much), the traditional conservative position on defense, at least since the Cold War began, has been to spend more on it. The traditional liberal cry has been to spend less, accompanied by pleas to use the money saved for "reordered priorities." Neither side has shown much interest in whether the money that *is* spent is spent in the right way.

Hart has abandoned the "less is better" dogma—he concedes a current need to increase defense spending. But he also refuses to accept the equally dogmatic "bigger is better" position championed by most conservatives and enshrined in the Reagan budget. Instead, in the mid-1970s, Hart became the leading congressional spokesman for what is now called military reform. "Just spending more will not solve our problems," he argues at every opportunity. "We risk being like the French in the 1930s, debating how much to spend each year on the Maginot Line. If what we are buying will not work on the battlefield, then it does not matter how much of it we have."

In general, Hart has fought for the purchase of more reliable, more numerous, and simpler weapons than those the armed services and their defense-contractor "constituencies" prefer. He advocates smaller, non-nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, larger numbers of more basic jet fighters, and an alternative to the $2.8 million M-1 turbine tank, with its distressing tendency to break down whenever it encounters terrain less hospitable than the Chrysler parking lot. The military reformers would also replace the

Pentagon's basic strategy for conventional warfare, which emphasizes wearing down the enemy through superior firepower, with a "maneuver" strategy featuring surprise, deception, and flexibility.

Hart's defense position is anything but middle-of-the-roadism. Nor is it simply a more ambitious version of the traditional liberal desire to end Pentagon waste by getting "more bang for the buck." (In fact, liberal "more bang" suggestions helped lay the groundwork for the super-complex, unreliable weapons Hart opposes.) Hart's stand is an immoderate attack on the fundamental methods by which the Pentagon goes about defending the nation, and

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as such it qualifies as a genuine label-defying New Idea.

The fact that Hart unearthed this idea long before it became fashionable, and the possibility he might come up with more like it, are what make him the most engaging figure on the Democratic horizon. So it's worthwhile subjecting him now to what might be called the Jimmy Carter Test. This test is named for an obscure retired governor who once convinced many people, including the editors of this magazine, that he should be president. Most of them later came to regret it, as the strengths of their candidate were shown to mask fatal weaknesses. It was with the goal of uncovering any fatal weaknesses, well in advance of election time, that I set out earlier this year to take a close look at the Democrats' latest possible salvation.

Theme Music

Hart is, in many ways, everything our civics books tell us a senator—or president—should be. He is diligent, rising at six or seven o'clock every morning to read *The New York Times* or *The Economist* thoroughly. He arrives at committee meetings well prepared. In the words of a friend, he is "a vacuum cleaner for information. If you say, 'Hey, there was something interesting on that subject in such-and-such publication,'

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he'll make a note and go read it." Coming into the Senate without any formal economics training, Hart set about teaching himself, wading through Samuelson and then Galbraith. Where other senators spend their time greasing up interest groups and constituents, Hart spends much of his alone, reading and thinking. Aides who wander into his office often find yellow legal pads filled with neat outlines of themes, principles, and particulars.

If all the desk work reminds you of someone, it should. Like Jimmy Carter, Hart is something of a student-politician. This may be inevitable, given his efforts to avoid the ideological flash-cards that normally relieve politicians of the need to learn anything fresh. And since, unlike a Kennedy or a Rockefeller, Hart cannot afford a retinue of aides and academics to go out and find ideas for him, he must (like Carter) do much of the work himself.

But Hart is not another Carter. For one thing, he's less insecure: he feels no need to brag about how hard he works. Where Carter's mind generated lists—like the famous inventory of goals his aides found, the one that began with "World Peace" and "Full Employment"—Hart likes to subsume specifics under broad themes. He grows uncomfortable when no theme is there. It was the scattershot quality of anti-Pentagon politics in the early 1970s, when individual liberal senators in alliance with General Accounting Office gadflies staked out particular weapons systems as "theirs" to criticize, that drove Hart to find an overarching framework under which to evaluate *all* defense questions. He found it in the theories of the "Boyd Group," military reformers associated with retired Air Force Colonel James Boyd.

At most political hoedowns, Hart is easy to find. He will be standing near a wall in a stiff Secret Service pose.

As a student, Hart already seems to be several grades beyond where Carter was when he assumed the presidency. It is unlikely that a President Hart would have to delegate the job of fashioning basic administration policies to task forces, as Carter did (offering only the general injunction to "be bold"). If Hart ever arrives at the White House, one suspects it will be more in the manner of Reagan, with an agenda in hand.

Gary Hart is also responsible—not in the sense that has become synonymous with dull, but in the laudable sense. He knows whenever he criticizes something he must suggest a better alternative, on the off chance that someone might actually take his advice. In this respect he compares favorably with many in his party's liberal wing. It was not unusual, for example, to find Senate liberals who opposed draining the budget, at $10 billion a shot, for additional nuclear carrier groups. But Hart spent his energy pushing hard for an alternative, namely the development of smaller, cheaper diesel carriers—something you did not catch a George McGovern or a John Culver doing.

In the hysterical days immediately following the Three Mile Island accident, Hart, then chairman of an important nuclear subcommittee, appeared on several network interview shows and was tacitly invited to call for a total nuclear shutdown, which would have placed his name on front pages across the country. Hart demurred. "It is incumbent on those who would take such a step," he noted, responsibly, "to say where the power will come from."

Where Hart's convictions have led him into the inevitable conflicts with powerful lobbies, his record is more courageous than most. Early in his Senate career he voted to break up the big oil companies. ("I like oil companies," he quipped, "that's why I want more of them.") Years later, he did not understand why an exception to the basic rules of free enterprise should be made in Chrysler's case. "It seemed so contrary to *everything,*" he says with a frustrated look, recalling the debate. Hart held his ground and voted against the bail-out despite, he remembers, "having a room full of labor people yelling at me." In 1979, Hart's support for deregulation of natural gas prices so angered William Holater, lobbyist for the International Association of Machinists, that, according to a member of Hart's staff, Holater sent Hart a not-so-subtle note saying the union was "reviewing" its "relationship" with the senator. Hart sent copies of the note to other major labor leaders, with a letter attached saying, "This is precisely what is wrong with the American labor movement." "When somebody bites me," he explained to an aide, "I want them to know I bite back."

Hart's attention to the technical merits of bills

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sometimes baffles reporters looking for the kinds of grand gestures and clean confrontations that make good copy. But Hart seems refreshingly heedless of the ways a particular up-down vote might be characterized. For example, he has consistently opposed the so-called "Bumpers Bill," which would give the courts greater power over regulatory agencies. Hart feels the courts have enough power already. The majority of his colleagues may agree with him, but they have rushed to support the bill, if only because it makes them appear to be "doing something" about regulation.

Making Winter Book

If Hart sometimes seems like a model senator out of some League of Women Voters fantasy, the impression grows when he talks of how the pressures to provide constituent services and the demands of special interests have perverted the deliberative role the Founding Fathers envisioned for the upper chamber. To Hart, a more suitable senatorial lifestyle would include considerably less politicking and considerably more discussion of the great issues with the great minds of the day—more time, he says, to "sit back and make policy." This ideal of the lofty, responsible policy-maker seems central to Hart's self-image, to the way he goes about his current job, and the way he would probably go about being president. And the more I saw of him, the more his weaknesses and his strengths seemed connected with the ways in which he was a good policy-maker, as opposed to something rare and perhaps more valuable—namely, a good *politician.*

As a candidate, Hart's major asset is his personality, which is almost perfectly matched to the constraints of television. He speaks in pleasant, earnest Midwestern tones, his only facial quirk an appealing one—the ability to lift his razor eyebrows, Spock-like, to emphasize some mild irony. "Whatever he says to you sounds agreeable somehow," recalls Joe Dolan, the veteran Kennedy adviser whom Hart beat in the 1974 Colorado senatorial primary. "He makes people think he's on their side." This facility of Hart's works well on TV and also in small gatherings, where he can be equally effective. But it is television that the party men and campaign consultants are thinking about when they write Hart's name in their "winter book."

Yet Hart is not a natural candidate in the old-fashioned sense. He dislikes glad-handing, false intimacy, and asking strangers for money. If he can fill up a television screen, he does not fill up a banquet hall. Speaking from a prepared text, he can be an uninspiring, even wooden figure. At most political hoedowns or mixers, Hart is easy to find. He will be standing near a wall, a little awkwardly, hands clasped primly behind his back, waiting for people to come to him. As a campaigner, Hart seemingly forces himself to do what for others is an act of instinct or addiction.

In a period when even the most cliche-ridden Democrats are calling for unspecified "new ideas," Hart is that rare politician who has actually discovered some.

"If Gary could have an election the way he'd want it," says Tom Gleason, his Denver press secretary, "he'd take out some television time at some hour when people could watch; he'd say, 'This is my platform, and this is why it's important'; he'd answer questions; and that would be it. It could all be done the day before the vote. Traditional campaigning is not his choice."

Last March, Hart appeared at the Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner in Denver, Colorado's biggest annual event for Democrats. It was on the same occasion 11 years ago that Hart had shepherded an unannounced presidential candidate, George McGovern, through a series of meetings with party and civic leaders. McGovern had missed his plane out of Denver, but in an airport meeting room, he had asked the young Denver lawyer to join his campaign. It was the turning point in Hart's life.

This year Hart was on the dais, one of Colorado's two highest Democratic office holders. But, once again, there was some out-of-town presidential talent on parade—Governor Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia. The day before, I had asked Hart how his "new generation" of Democratic leaders would come to the fore. "Just watch Jay Rockefeller tomorrow," Hart had joked.

I followed Hart's advice. During the pre-speech cocktail hour, the tall West Virginia governor worked the hotel lobby crowd like a pro, slapping backs, introducing his 12-year-old

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son, making small talk with strangers in a way that seemed at least natural and sincere. Meanwhile, over in the corner of the lobby, behind some chairs, stood Hart in his stiff Secret Service pose.

When the time came for speeches, it seemed clear that Rockefeller lacked Hart's burden-of-governing thoughtfulness. But that didn't bother the party faithful. Rockefeller's old-fashioned, stem-winding, entertaining, and virtually content-less oration brought thundering, affectionate applause. Hart was applauded, too, but as if from a distance. There was a lack of warmth between the party workers and their senator; they were glad he survived, proud of his growing national stature, yet he was somehow not one of their own. When the dinner ended, Hart walked quietly out a side entrance, alone.

As any campaign consultant will tell you, the banquet-hall oratorical skills of a Jay Rockefeller or a Ted Kennedy are less important in getting elected today than Hart's ability to come across on the tube. But with those old banquet-hall skills came something else, something that remains important—a natural delight in going out among the regular folks, listening to them, sizing them up and stirring them up. Hart seems to lack the true politician's gift, and even if that no longer stops him from being electable, it may stop him from being the senator or president he could be. One example is the way Hart has gone about generating his neo-liberal ideas in the areas outside defense.

Tribes on the Hill

Ask Hart when he first realized, as he once put it, that "liberalism was near bankruptcy," and he will talk about the fateful press conference at the Los Angeles Hyatt House in 1973 when George McGovern's economic advisers attempted to explain their candidate's infamous $1,000-a-person welfare proposal. "I thought it would be a minor event," remembers Hart. "I thought it was wired. I didn't even go to it. But I walked down after five or ten minutes, and it was total chaos. It turned out the economists couldn't answer the questions.

"The point is that George McGovern had put forth some novel, constructive ideas," Hart says, "and when the press challenged, the background work wasn't there. He was trying to be different, but he wasn't finding the backup."

In his 1973 campaign memoir, *Right From the Start,* Hart wrote that "the best thinkers of the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, and even 1960s were not producing." Today, he says, "I'd write it differently, but I was trying to make the point that I'd gone out and looked for the new Schlesingers, and they weren't there."

Hart sees a major part of his current policy-maker's role as rounding up the new Schlesingers. So his schedule is studded with opportunities to meet them—seminars at the Aspen Institute, European convocations of the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis. There are lunches with hot political academics like Laurence Tribe of Harvard Law School, or eager "issues" men like Peter Edelman, long-time Kennedy aide and former New York State Youth Commissioner. "Gary," says an admiring staff member, "is like a kid in a candy store these days."

But there is a discomfiting feeling that as Hart sets out to harvest the nation's new ideas, he is not looking in any particularly new acreage. Aspen, Harvard Law School, *The Economist, The New York Times.* These aren't, one suspects, the places where Hart will find the neo-liberal equivalent of Luther in his privy, Marx in the British Museum, or even Laffer with his cocktail napkin.

Nor is this the milieu where Hart found the ideas that have given him a reputation as a fresh thinker. The Boyd Group has attained some respectability of late, so it's important to remember that when Hart stumbled on them in the mid-70s, they were regarded by most respectable defense experts as a lunatic fringe. The group is, in fact, a gaggle of eccentrics, from Boyd himself, a former fighter jock who has spent decades polishing a four-hour lecture into which he crams the entire history of human conflict, to Pierre Sprey, who wears turtlenecks and sandals (with socks) around the Pentagon, to Edward Luttwak, a hawkish strategist who cultivates a secretive, mad-genius persona.

Hart was introduced to this odd crew by his defense adviser, a thirtyish man named William Lind. Lind was recommended to Hart by former Senator Robert Taft, Jr., the naval expert whose role Hart assumed on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Lind would not exactly blend in around the cheese tray at Aspen. He is a tall man with an awkward paunch cantilevered over his belt buckle. He has a picture of Mussolini on his wall, and his red, babyish face grows redder the more he discusses the Pentagon's "insane" policies that will "make us lose World War III." Lind's whole demeanor says "this man is a nut"—the sort of kid who in high school might spend his lunch hours plotting a bloodless coup

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of the Chess Club.

One wonders whether Hart would hire Lind today, if he walked in the door without the imprimatur of a respected figure like Taft—or whether Lind could even get in the door, given the long line of credentialed, smooth-surface Harvard types forming there as Hart's presidential prospects grow. A skilled politician would not begrudge the need for experts, of course—even respectable ones. But he would also constantly try to escape from the Brookings-Aspen ethos and make real-world forays—to look for unconventional talent and to find the perspective to judge whether the things his better-resumed advisers were telling him made sense.

Outside the defense area, you do not sense that Hart has this real-world perspective—or even its closest substitute, the chutzpah of the trial lawyer who, having ripped apart a hundred credentialed experts on the witness stand, is ready to constantly pit his critical faculties against those of a Harvard laureate. Instead you sense (and Hart's friends confirm) the eager attitude of the "kid in a candy store," the student who will react to a new theory from an accepted authority with a fascinated "Is that so?"

When I first interviewed Hart, he explained the tough time he was having articulating a neo-liberal domestic platform. "There's no Boyd theory on the domestic side," he said. "I've had to chip it out of solid rock." The project seemed to revolve around finding the right expert to join Hart's staff, a search that was largely confined to credentialed, mainstream economists, as opposed to any Boyd-like outsiders.

In June I got a call from Hart's press secretary with the news that the senator had found his expert in Perry Quick, a staff economist with the Federal Reserve Board who was "recommended by everybody," including chief Carter economic adviser Charles Schultze—which, considering Carter's economic success, is a little like being recommended for parole by Norman Mailer. More encouraging was the news that Hart had finally found a new idea that could turn the economic issues "on their side."

But Hart's new idea, it developed, wasn't so new after all: it was the notion of a "post-industrial economy," something that has been kicking around in graduate seminars since the first shoe factory went belly-up in Massachusetts. Hart had gleaned the idea from MIT economist David Birch and John Naisbett, a "futurist" pollster who has been appearing before Democratic study groups. Naisbett makes his living selling corporations something

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called *Trend Reports*, which analyzes the public mood by looking at the contents of local newspapers. Some of Naisbett's trends are "machismo society" to "androgynous society," "either/or" to "multiple option," "left brain" to "right brain," and "an industrial society" to "an information society."

It's hard to take seriously Hart's claim that the public *wants* government to be slow, clumsy, and too expensive.

"The future of our country is unquestionably in intelligence, communications, software, an information society," Hart enthusiastically explained over the phone. A week earlier, in a television appearance, he had chastised both political parties for "debating whether to bail out Chrysler . . . when in effect we ought to be acknowledging this tremendous grassroots, bottom-up surge of new technology and high-technology industries, educationally based and service-based, flourishing elements of our economy." When I asked him what actual measures such an "acknowledgment" might involve, Hart said only, "I'm working on those . . . I've been doing a lot of reading. I've been talking to a lot of people."

Never mind that it seemed one of the few political advances of recent years was a recognition of the defects of an America that buys its cars from Japan and Germany while trying to export its lawyers. What is troubling is the impression of Hart as an intellectual ingenue swept up in an academic fad, proclaiming his conversion in public before he has a clear idea of the fad's implications, or even of whether it has any implications.

A Stand-down Comic

Not that Hart's senatorial think-tank hasn't generated some appealing innovations. On the issue of welfare, for example, Hart has suggested a system that would combine "conservative" measures denying welfare to those who can work with the traditionally "liberal" notion of a guaranteed job. In the tax area, Hart has proposed policies that encourage purposeful investment without creating shelters for unproductive money-stashing. Instead of expanding the capital-gains loophole, for example, Hart favors restricting additional tax breaks to investors who put money into the creation of *new* firms and factories, through the purchase of an instrument that would be called "new capacity stock."

But Hart has yet to put his innovations together under the sort of compelling, clear themes Ronald Reagan uses to sell his ideas. If Hart sees himself as a lofty policy-planner, he too often talks like one, especially in situations that require a strong emotional connection with the electorate.

I watched Hart tape a segment of an NBC special on the Rapid Deployment Force, one of the senator's specialties. Hart seemed bent on frustrating Garrick Utley's efforts to obtain a concise, understandable summary of his views (which are that the rapid deployment mission should be given to the marines, not to yet another multilayered Pentagon bureaucracy). Why might the army be so interested in getting a piece of RDF? Utley asked. Hart's answer: "Well, if you were a colonel in the army over in Europe [Utley lights up] and you looked at the future and saw what was going to happen in terms of our nation's security interests [Utley looks expectant], you'd have to think . . . there might be a substantial stand-down in the out years."

Stand-down in the out years? Hart is not yet an Alexander Haig in his choice of language, but it often does seem he has spent too much time among the analysts and experts, and too little time trying to boil down his thoughts into pithy phrases the voters will understand and remember. Hart once told *Business Week* that the "agenda of the Democratic Party should be to devise nonprogrammatic, nonbureaucratic solutions to . . . incentivize the private sector."

Were Hart the sort of politician who loved to go out and stir up a crowd, sentences like that would never pass his lips—and he might be better able to capitalize on the good ideas he comes up with. Take Hart's welfare suggestions, for example. Hart tends to talk about the policy-planner's favorite aspects—about work incentives, cash versus in-kind subsidies, and ways to target different parts of the labor force.

But a candidate who repeatedly thrust himself into close contact with average people would have to defend his proposals in the cruder terms used for day-to-day exchanges. And he might

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have certain sentiments beaten into him—most importantly that the public tends to view welfare not as a question of incentives or efficiency, but of morality. Deep down, voters just don't like the idea of giving money to people who could work for it. At the same time, there is no such moral objection to giving those who need it a job—as Ronald Reagan pointed out last year in the process of praising the WPA as one of the "most valuable" programs ever undertaken by government.

A neo-liberal *politician* might sense some electric potential here for fusing emotions that predate "liberalism" and "conservatism"—the public's understandable hostility to freeloaders, and the compassionate emotions that might support an ambitious program to employ the unemployed. Hart has accomplished this marriage on an intellectual level—but he doesn't seem to sense the emotional potential of his own idea.

On "Meet the Press" Hart took a tailor-made question about "the federal government being the last employer if people don't have jobs" and somehow turned it into an arid discussion of labor-market segmentation. "Part of the answer to your question lies in who those unemployed people are," Hart responded, "and we are becoming more sophisticated, very late, in identifying unemployed people, whether it's teenagers, second-income earners in a family, marginally employed people, or people who want part-time jobs. . . ."

Hart has spent too much time among the analysts and experts, and too little time trying to boil down his thoughts into pithy phrases the voters will understand and remember.

Hart falls into similarly bloodless approaches with his tax ideas. His press releases and public utterances offer sophisticated schemes for closing loopholes and shelters, but little to rouse hostility toward the special interests and speculators who use the loopholes at the average voter's expense. Instead, Hart has called for a "National Commission on Taxation" to suggest changes in the tax laws after "careful study and analysis, extensive public hearings, and long discussions."

Why Not the Slowest?

Q: Do you think more politics might help make the system function? After all, when the Post Office operated on patronage, it worked. You could get rid of people if they did a bad job.

Hart: I'm not so sure. So you get the Democrats in and they are replaced by the Republicans who are replaced by the Democrats, all trying to do the same thing? I mean, do you really think the problems of government efficiency are all that severe?

Gary Hart's total working experience in government, before he became a senator, was a three-year post-law-school stint in the mid-1960s. He spent a year at the Justice Department working on internal security and espionage cases, and two years in the Interior Department solicitor's office, "making policy" for then-Secretary Stewart Udall. It is a tour of duty that doesn't seem to have left a very strong impression on Hart, certainly not the frustration with bureaucratic perversity and ineptitude that many bring away from similar experiences. When I broached the subject of government inefficiency, Hart dissented. "I don't see it," he said. "Don't you think that at Exxon, Chrysler, and AT&T they put the covers on the typewriters at five o'clock, too?"

They probably do, and that may explain the quality of Chrysler's cars and the condition of its stock. The knowledge that lassitude and inefficiency are spreading throughout society is not a very good reason for tolerating those qualities in the federal government; indeed, the kind of politician who cared about getting things done would want, most of all, to improve the federal machine that might otherwise frustrate his efforts. But Hart seems uninterested. "That has not been a big area of mine," he says, a bored, vaguely nauseated look coming over his face. "There are a lot of federal workers in my state, and I have necessarily been concerned about their plight." As for attempts to inject political accountability into the civil service system, he answers simply, "I prefer the civil service, for the standard reasons."

At one point, Hart even suggested that government inefficiency was a constitutional principle. Citing Thomas Jefferson (a particular idol of Hart's) he said, "The American people

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don't want an efficient government They are scared of it, because a government that can do good efficiently can do evil efficiently"

Worrying about the bureaucracy just doesn't seem to fit Hart's image as a sweeping political planner "I'm interested in major overhauls of government," he explains, "not so much in taking a screwdriver to the engine" Or, reverting to Brookings-speak, he asserts, "The problem isn't implementation efficiency It's policy-making efficiency" Referring to the Department of Energy's Keystone Kop attempts to allocate oil, he asks, "What's the point of saying you should do this job efficiently if the job you are trying to do is impossible?"

As usual, Hart has a point No amount of civil service reform would have made the oil allocation scheme work But what about good programs, the ones that *should* work? It's hard to take seriously Hart's claim that the public wants

He Lost His Hartpence

Senator Gary Hart was born Gary Hartpence in 1937 in Ottawa, Kansas Both his parents were of Irish descent Neither had finished high school His father moved from cattle ranching to insurance sales, then on to running a grocery store, and finally to selling heavy farm machinery Both parents were members of the Church of the Nazarene, a breakaway Methodist sect that Hart describes as "not quite fundamentalist" in its emphasis on "conservative personal behavior and demeanor"

Hartpence left Ottawa to attend Bethany College, a Nazarene school where drinking, dancing, and watching movies were prohibited He married his Bethany sweetheart, Lee Ludwig, an energetic, likable blond whose sister, Martha Keys, would later be elected to two terms in Congress from Kansas Hartpence set about equipping himself for a career teaching religion and philosophy

This meant that he became a product of the institution that has recently given us several politicians of cerebral bent and aloof demeanor divinity school In Hartpence's case it was Yale Divinity School He started in 1958 at first concentrating on existential philosophy (Marcel, Kierkegaard), later shifting to literature and producing long papers on topics like Humor in Faulkner" But he became caught up in John Kennedy's presidential campaign, and suddenly the prospect of professorhood seemed "insufficiently active and involved" Hartpence officially shortened his name (years later, he would also change his signature when constituents complained it was illegible) and switched to Yale Law School The latter move, Hart frankly admits, stemmed not from any particular desire to be a lawyer but to establish a "flexible base" from which to pursue his "increasing interest in public affairs and government One of his Yale law classmates was an ex-seminarian who had reached a similar decision Jerry Brown

While the devotion of a third politically successful theology student, David Stockman, seemed to increase the closer he came to military service, it's hard to label Hart's graduate studies as a device to avoid the draft But it had that effect Hart is defensive enough on the subject—arguing that his student deferments came in "low draft" years—to lend some credence to the theory that his interest in defense stems from a personal as well as political desire to fill this gap in his resume

Law school, in a sense, was the birthplace of the Hart we see today With the exception of his wife, he seems to have few friends from his pre-law days Hart is hard-pressed when asked to name even a single friend from high school.

In 1967—after his Kennedy connection landed him three years of special-assistant-type legal work in Washington—Hart moved to Denver, where he joined the ultra-respectable, politically prominent law firm of Ireland Stapleton & Pryor But it was clear Hart was interested in something other than making partner Within months of his Denver arrival he had organized a study group, complete with reading lists, of young Democratic types who met to discuss issues like party reform He joined Robert Kennedy's Colorado campaign in 1968, and commiserated with fellow-workers about how boring the practice of corporate law was

Hart became deeply involved in the brief but emotional Bobby Kennedy push in Colorado, and, observers say, he was 'really broken up" about Bobby's murder He flew to New York to ride the funeral train down to Washington But he was not paralyzed by grief In the time remaining before the Democrats' national caucus, he helped organize "On to Chicago," an effort to bring "a million' Gene McCarthy

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them carried out slowly, clumsily, and at great expense. This is the kind of cute notion that might amuse a seminar at Aspen, but that Hart could never get past a hall full of average voters.

Hart's benign faith in the ability of the bureaucracy is especially surprising considering his intimate knowledge of what defense officials can do with sensible policies. Indeed, a major goal of the military reform movement has been to point out how policies "implemented" by the bureaucracy produce weapons that look great on paper but don't go off when the button is pushed—and how the Pentagon's managerial ethic leads to leadership paralysis in the field. When it comes to the military, Hart worries intensely about what happens beyond the out box. When civil servants are involved, he'd rather not know what the troops are doing.

Hart's faith in bureaucrats and experts came together two years ago when he was grappling

supporters to the convention. Hart was quoted as calling, in uncharacteristically strident tones, for rallies, demonstrations, "whatever it takes to show the undemocratic nature of the Democratic convention."

After Chicago Hart quit his firm, setting up his own practice in a trendy, restored turn-of-the-century building shared with several other lawyers. His office mates were never quite sure how he paid the rent; there was some grant work, like studying the feasibility of "new towns" in energy-rich rural Colorado; there was also unpaid political work. Though Denver was a hotbed of Democratic antiwar insurgency, Hart poured his political energies into a presentation at the Denver meeting of the party's commission on internal reform, headed by George McGovern. Hart's moderate yet reformist position was well received. "We were all jealous," recalls a contemporary who spent his time planning marches. "We hadn't thought of that as a way to get ahead."

The rest, as they say, is history, or at least better known. Hart hooked up with McGovern and was transported, deus ex video, *onto the national political stage. His well-chronicled campaign camaraderie with Warren Beatty, Shirley MacLaine, Hunter Thompson and the like gave him a glamorous aura, so much so that* Playgirl *magazine later named him one of the "Ten Sexiest Men in America."*

When McGovern went over the cliff in November, Hart's self-confidence was momentarily shattered. He sat in the gloomy campaign headquarters brooding openly about his future, wondering if those associated with McGovern would be "blacklisted" from Democratic politics. But that didn't happen. Hart returned to Colorado in 1973 to join a crowded field vying for a chance to challenge incumbent Republican senator Peter Dominick. He countered his McGovernite image by endorsing President Ford's limited amnesty program, as well as the goal of a balanced budget. Like his classmate Brown, he also succeeded in tying his opponent to Watergate. Hart drew 60 percent of the vote in a state where McGovern had collected only 39 percent.

Hart's reelection drive last year was tougher. His opponent, Colorado Secretary of State Mary Estil Buchanan, had won public sympathy as a "gutsy little lady" who had taken on and beaten the leaders of her own party. Buchanan naturally tried to paint Hart as a cliched liberal, concentrating on a few of his votes taken out of context. Meanwhile Hart's media consultant, Arnie Grossman, had hepatitis, and as late as September Hart was airing smug commercials showing him pillow-fighting with his daughter.

Hart and pollster Pat Caddell brought in a new media man, Robert Squier, who made a last-ditch series of new commercials. They showed Hart commanding a tank, Hart descending hardhatted into an oil shale mine, Hart talking to angry farmers. These ads blurred any liberal image and indirectly raised the question of Buchanan's sex. In the waning days of the campaign, Buchanan helped by making a series of bizarre utterances, and the public began to perceive her as a dangerous flake. Hart won, but with just 50.3 percent of the vote. Friends say he is slightly bitter that, after six years of civics-book senatoring, he was put through such an irrational ordeal.

Hart and his wife Lee have managed to stay together, but it has not been easy for them. During the McGovern campaign, while Hart was palling around with Beatty and Thompson, Lee's friends say they attended a Tupperware party at her home. When Washington Post *reporter Sally Quinn asked him about his infrequent visits with his wife, Hart replied, "Let's just say I'm a believer in reform marriage." It was a quote he quickly came to regret; in the wake of the Quinn profile, which made Hart sound like an open-shirted swinger, he has become guarded, almost secretive, about his personal life. Last year he and Lee were officially separated for six months, but they were reunited before the campaign. Friends say the tensions remain.*

—R.M.K.

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with synfuels development—a question of no small importance to Colorado. Characteristically, Hart wanted to avoid a knee-jerk pro or con position, so he commissioned his staff to undertake a total assessment of the nation's energy production and needs. The experts his staff consulted were the experts in Jimmy Carter's Energy Department, the people who brought you oil allocation. At the time the Energy Department was committed to scaring the public with make-believe projections of declining oil and gas supplies. Not surprisingly, when Hart unveiled his "Energy Budget" (complete with bar graphs) in January 1980, it showed that at best natural gas production could only be raised to the equivalent of 11.7 million barrels of oil per day by 1990. That left, Hart's study said, a 700,000-barrel gap to be filled by ripping up the Rockies.

Since Hart's "Energy Budget" was released, several press reports have appeared about extensive new natural gas discoveries. (For one of the first, see "The Energy Crisis Is Over," *The Washington Monthly,* October 1980.) Less than a year after Hart's announcements, credible estimates pegged potential gas production as high as twice Hart's level, easily eliminating his anticipated need for synfuels. These new discoveries were coming in about the time the "Energy Budget" was being prepared. Had Hart told his staff to go outside the bureaucracy and discover what was actually happening in the field, he might have learned about the gas bonanza. Instead he trusted the officials and experts of the Energy Department, oblivious to their biases. He wound up with a policy that was thoughtful, responsible—and wrong.

When Hart endorses policies that might require government machinery to "implement" them, a curious self-deception sometimes seems to be at work. Hart supports the Davis-Bacon Act, which instructs the Labor Department to set the "prevailing wage" for construction work in every community. He assured me that "it can be done with a minimum of bureaucracy. You get all the parties in a room and say, 'O.K., this will be the prevailing wage in Houston this year,' and they can all sign a piece of paper." Last year, the rules, regulations, and wage determinations under the Davis-Bacon Act occupied more than 2,100 pages in the *Federal Register.*

Life of Staff

The difference between the politician and the policy-maker, in short, has to do with people.

If the ideas Hart produces aren't always overpowering, give him time. He's already shown more originality in his defense thinking than anyone in the Democratic field.

This is why the true politician cherishes his contacts with people both within the bureaucracy and on the receiving end of programs—so he can find what is going wrong and why. It's these same contacts that allow true politicians to question the blandishments of experts, the better to make good policy in the first place, and the better to communicate it to voters in the second.

There is another sense in which Hart seems to lack the motive force of the best politicians—the senator's approach to his fellow lawmakers. He tends to disdain the normal favor-swapping and stroking, preferring compromises based on rational appeals to common interests. During this year's budget fight, Hart's strategy was consistent: he would hammer out a budget "mark" designed to be minimally acceptable to a broad range of senators. "The idea," he said, "was to go for the middle between Metzenbaum and Reagan." Hart put forward his proposals, signed up as many co-sponsors as possible, and then tried to reason with other committee members, Democrat or Republican. The strategy didn't work, of course, in the face of Republican Party discipline—but the contrast with Metzenbaum's posturing was vivid, and may indicate one reason Hart has few personal enemies in the Senate. Indeed, despite his ideological preference for "third positions" rather than middle-of-the-roadism, Hart's instinct when confronted with a concrete political fight is to lunge for consensus. "This country has made the greatest strides during periods of consensus," he maintains, while admitting, "It's tedious, it's less exciting."

If there is truth to Hart's celebration of consensus, there is also the nagging suspicion that it appeals to him in part because of his own limitations as a wheeler-dealer. It's hard to imagine Hart twisting anyone's arm, or giving another senator a Lyndon Johnson-like "treatment." (His idea of "biting back" at the

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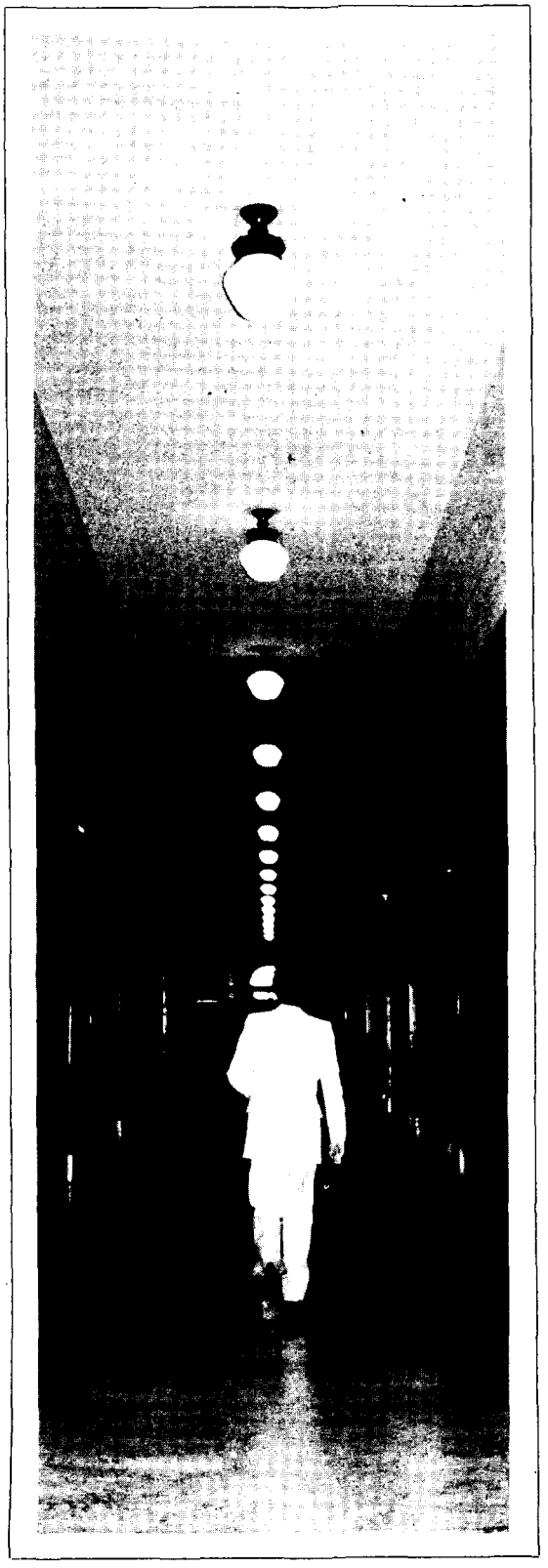

Machinists, remember, was to circulate a critical letter.) If you want to ram a bill through, I suggest you call on some other senator. Given his distaste for even the normal, lawful techniques of pressure politics, you might expect a President Hart to have some difficulty building coalitions and winning approval for his programs in the face of political opposition, no matter how sensible his "new ideas" might be.

Equally serious danger signals crop up in Hart's relationships with his staff. Turnover in Hart's office is low. Part of the reason is that Hart doesn't like to fire people; a larger part is that his aides genuinely respect him for his honest, responsible qualities. But Hart's relationships with his employees are not those of a man running a potent organization. Instead they are reminiscent of what a McGovern aide once told reporter Robert Sam Anson about Hart's role in the 1972 campaign: "We needed a benevolent despot. What we got was a philosopher-king." Hart has a reputation for being aloof, screening himself off behind his top aides—administrative assistant Larry Smith, defense adviser Lind, and "legislative co-directors" Kathy Bushkin and Bill Shore. With the exception of Smith, all of these people have reputations for being competent and likable. (Bushkin in particular has the valuable ability of making people instinctively feel guilty for even *thinking* unfavorable things about her boss.) It's understandable why Hart might let these aides protect him, giving him more time to read and "make policy," but succumbing to this temptation is almost always a devastating failing in a politician. It means he is cut off from direct information about what is really going on below decks in his own organization.

A small but revealing incident along that line occurred at a Senate reception Hart recently threw for a fellow Pentagon critic. The party was not a minor event on Hart's schedule—invitations went out to members of the Senate, admirals and generals, well-known journalists, and others. It was the sort of event staff members live for, a chance to bask in the boss's reflected authority while hobnobbing with people they would otherwise only read about, a chance to clip a story about the event from the next morning's *Washington Post* party coverage, send it to Mom and Dad back home and say, "See, I was there."

A true political leader knows that such events provide, at no extra cost, a means to keep the staff revved up for months. But Hart did not go out of his way to make sure his own people

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would be welcome at the reception. Aides below Hart's four-person inner circle weren't even informed of the pending event; they had to learn of it from outside sources. When they asked if they could attend, Smith responded with the sort of one-big-happy-family management philosophy that so endeared Stuart Eizenstat to the lower echelons of the Carter White House—Smith hemmed and hawed, acted annoyed at the presumption, and then finally, only grudgingly, consented to invite the staff.

The reception proceeded unaffected, of course, and the assembled personages were not noticeably offended by the presence of middle-level lawyers and legislative analysts. Any morale benefits the event might have engendered had, however, been neutralized. The staff felt insulted instead of excited. Yet none of the angry staffers blamed Hart himself for the snub. Such is the senator's isolation that they automatically assumed he knew nothing of the affair.

But if a senator doesn't know what is going on with his 35-person staff—well, what would he be like as president, with 2,000 under him, where the incentives to cut off information and monopolize the boss's attention would be infinitely greater?

His Hedgehog in the Ring

My final interview with Hart is nearly over. The senator is tired and somewhat irritable. That morning he had been cross-examined by prominent Washington reporters at the exclusive newsmakers' breakfast organized by *Christian Science Monitor* editor "Budge" Sperling. At lunch, he had answered questions about his future from the editors of *The New Republic* in a faculty-seminar-like atmosphere that had puzzled and unsettled him. Now, understandably, he seems a bit sick of journalists.

But he senses that his defense of "policy-planning" and his disdain for "implementation" have not gone over well, and he mounts a final defense. "Isaiah Berlin once wrote an essay called 'The Hedgehog and the Fox,'" he explains. "He said there are two kinds of minds. The hedgehog knows one big thing. The fox knows a lot of little things. I guess I'm arguing here for being a hedgehog . . . people are never really both. . . ." Hart's voice trails off.

"Except for Tolstoy," he adds, thinking out loud. "Tolstoy was both."

You can't dislike Gary Hart. Any politician who would begin free-associating about Tolstoy at the risk of undercutting his own sales pitch to a reporter can't be all bad. Hart is willing to follow his thoughts where they lead him, and that may ultimately be his most appealing quality—you know he is *trying*. He is not just biding his time, like a Fritz Mondale or a John Glenn. He is not content to recycle the same old ideas, like an Edward Kennedy. Nor is he counting on one of the new Democratic "study groups" or dinner clubs to come up with his new ideas for him. He is staying up late nights, trying to figure it out on his own. And if all of what he has produced so far isn't overpowering, give him time; he's already shown more originality, in his defense thinking alone, than anyone in the Democratic field.

But . . . in my months of Hart-watching, there was always a but.

There was Hart lapsing into Pentagonese when he had a chance to explain in his home medium some of his best ideas. There was Hart in his postindustrial swoon. There was Hart defending budget allocations for what he calls "human capital expenditures"—vocational schools, job training, and the like—and defending them unquestioningly, in the stale liberal manner he would never apply to defense, as if the results achieved could be measured by the dollars Congress budgeted. There was Hart hiding in the corner at another political rally, or calling for another presidential commission.

One of Hart's reelection spots showed actor Ed Asner flashing his most benign Lou Grant smile and saying, "Vote for Gary Hart, he's the best." Hart clearly is the best in precisely the conventional sense that ad was meant to convey—conscientious, responsible, thoughtful, unbought. But a real Democratic messiah, I came to feel, would be a different sort of person. He would combine Hart's diligent policy-making with an older-style politician's urge to mix with people outside the safety of the seminar room, to find out what was really going on among the voters, the bureaucrats, and on his own staff. He would have a natural talent for translating his platform into familiar, decent human emotions—and building his platform *from* those emotions. And he would care, in an angry and frustrated way, about what happens to policies once they are "made," because he would care very much about getting things done.

Gary Hart is not that person. Maybe he can become it; alone among the current crop of contenders, he has shown the capacity for self-examination, indeed self-transformation, that would be required. But maybe, as Hart suggests, that ideal politician is as rare as Tolstoy. □

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Questions the Press Didn't Ask About the Atlanta Murders

by Charles Euchner

So far the only person arrested for the murders of black children in Atlanta has been Wayne B. Williams, a black man. Yet for months black leaders claimed the killings were racially motivated and that the crimes would have been solved faster had the victims been white. Was there a rational basis for this apparently inflammatory conclusion, and for the decision by the media to buy the argument and peddle it widely?

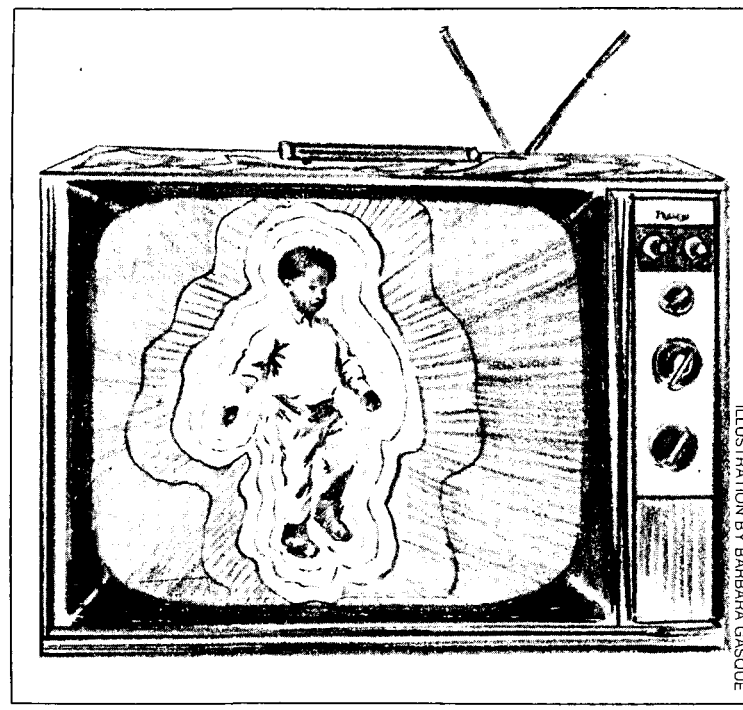

ILLUSTRATION BY BARBARA GASQUE

The race angle first surfaced in November of last year with the discovery of the body of Yusef Bell, age nine. Bell was the son of a divorced civil rights leader named Camille Bell. After Yusef had been missing for a week, Bell grew distraught and called a columnist for the *Atlanta Constitution*. When more bodies were found, she and other mothers formed a support group to put pressure on the police by drawing press attention. "It's a class thing," Bell said. "They'd have found the killer if the people in this city cared." Later she was more explicit: "The feeling is that if it ain't the Klan, it's the cops."

Charles Euchner, a former intern at The Washington Monthly, *is now a New York writer.*

This feeling—the idea that blacks were under siege in Atlanta—made the story especially compelling for the press and the public. "A certain mood exists in this country that it is all right to do anything to black people," Washington Mayor Marion Barry said. "I maintain that if those people were white people, we would have had no problem [getting federal help]." Jesse Jackson said Atlanta had become the scene of a "cultural conspiracy to kill black people." Dorothy Gilliam, a columnist for *The Washington Post*, suggested "a motley clique of racists" was responsible for the murders. Dick Gregory said the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta was snatching black children for use in experiments; later he vowed to go on a hunger

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strike until the murders were solved. Black radio stations played old tapes of Malcolm X exhorting blacks to stand together.

Whites, too, had little doubt about the race factor. *The Nation* said the murders were probably racially motivated, adding, "We have a government whose policies write off whole sections of the American poor as expendable." *The National Review* threw in its own slant: the killings might have been touched off by "white anger over federal initiatives" for the poor. By spring graduating college students were protesting the failure to solve the crimes. The assumptions about the cases hardened: *if whites were being killed, the police would have solved the cases . . . police don't care about blacks.*

There was only one problem with those assumptions. They weren't true.

Murder, particularly when the press pounds away at the grisly details ("Another black child dead in Atlanta. Details at 11 o'clock"), predictably arouses irrational emotions. But in the case of the Atlanta killings, no one seemed willing to point out just how irrational some of the comments were. Millions of words were written by hundreds of reporters covering the story, and not once that I saw was any effort made to get to the bottom of the racism charge.

One thing they might have done was get an FBI print-out of the figures on crime activity in Atlanta. The statistics tell a fascinating story. In 1977, cases were closed in 83 percent of all murders of blacks, but in only 65 percent of white murders. In 1978, the figures were 85 percent versus 66 percent, and in 1979, they were 58 versus 54. Statistics like these are certainly not conclusive, but they should at the very least serve as the caution light that could have slowed the mad rush to charge racism.

So the media conveyed what may have been a wrong idea of the racial attitudes of the Atlanta police department and what so far appears to have been the wrong idea of what race the murderer belonged to. The press—it must be said—may have even inspired him to do the deeds. That is a dirty little secret that for predictable reasons has been kept largely out of the papers and off television. Wayne Williams is a self-confessed media junkie and publicity hound. More importantly, he has not been charged with any of the early murders. "I'm not at all sure we had a single killer methodically snatching children at the beginning of this," says Joseph Burton, the DeKalb County, Georgia, medical examiner. "But if that man didn't exist then, we have created him." □

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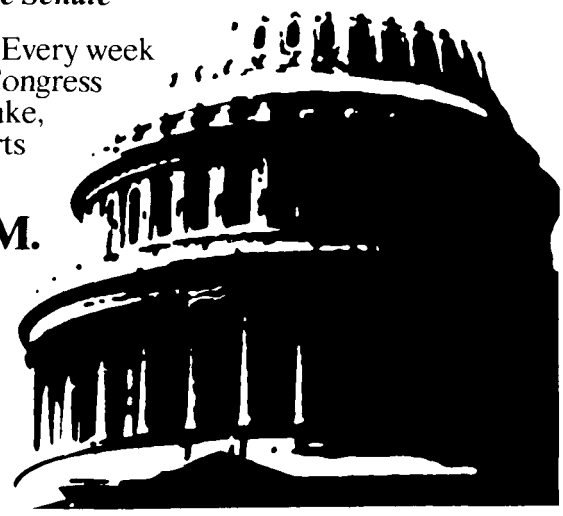

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TEN WAYS TO TAKE BACK WHAT WE GAVE JAPAN

by Robert C. Wood

ILLUSTRATION BY PAT MORRISON

Five years ago, when I worked at a financially troubled Tokyo newspaper, my Japanese fellow-workers insisted their company was on the rocks because managers and employees acted too Japanese.

"You'd think an English-language paper would have international-style management, but here things are just done the old Japanese way," one young son of Nippon grumbled. Japanese lack originality, he said. Though they willingly spend long hours at work, most don't seem to care whether they accomplish anything in the process, another man explained.

I suspect there was truth in my co-workers' ideas. Some Japanese attitudes certainly contribute to Japanese success, but I think

Robert C. Wood is associate editor of Inc., *a magazine for small businesses. He has lived in Japan and speaks Japanese.*

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America sells herself short by overemphasizing Japanese managerial brilliance and deep-seated values to explain Japan's achievements. Japan's prosperity derives not from the fact that its managers and workers are inherently more competent or less lazy than ours; they aren't. What's different is that the Japanese government has made good use of the kinds of government institutions and policies we introduced them to after World War II—better use, in fact, than we have ourselves.

I suspect America can improve itself immeasurably simply by adopting Japanese policies similar to those we once implemented for Japan. Trying that is surely more intelligent than relying on tax cuts to solve all our ills, or even urging managers to copy Japanese approaches while continuing obsolete government policies that encourage their opposites. Four and a half years in Japan has left me inclined to think that if economic revitalization is the great challenge of the 1980s, Japanese-style policies can make the difference between a decade of mean-spiritedness and a decade of real recovery.

The following Japan-inspired reforms for America won't cost huge sums or threaten to ruin any powerful interest groups. And they might go a long way toward making our economy soar like Japan's.

1. Pass laws that specifically permit corporate directors to treat employees as favorably as stockholders.

Japanese company presidents never pretend their primary job is to enrich investors. They always acknowledge the equal importance of employees, customers, and the rest of society as well. But even when U.S. managers embrace a Japanese-style "corporate philosophy" that endorses goals like employee security, they usually still believe in the supremacy of short-term profit. The rest is just window-dressing.

Why the difference? Well, Japan's Confucian tradition never called for profit maximization, and Americans, after dropping A-bombs, taught Japanese managers to be "democratic." Meanwhile, American business leaders back home still believed democracy mustn't interfere with the bottom line. But more fundamentally—and ironically—the very regulations and common-law safe-guards that are supposed to prevent American managers from abusing their power also prevent (or at least strongly discourage) them from committing themselves to their employees in the same way Japanese managers do.

It's not precisely clear what American law expects from company directors, but in the past decade enterprising lawyers have made it especially unlikely that American managers will shift to the democratic views we once sold to the Japanese. Attorneys for allegedly neglected shareholders have been suing company directors for fantastic sums on the shareholders' behalf. Few collect, but since a winning attorney can expect perhaps 15 percent of a settlement that might run into tens of millions, director negligence suits are one of the legal profession's growth areas.

It's doubtful that profit-hungry managers (or even the lawyers who sue claiming that managers aren't profit-hungry enough) are valiantly acting in the interests of people who need an immediate dividend to live on. Widows on the edge of poverty don't own much of the big companies' stock. Most companies are owned largely by pension funds set up specifically to invest people's money for the very long term. And for the very long term, putting employees' interests first need not produce much less profit than traditional American management does. Better teamwork can leave a nice amount left over for the stockholder. Even though the bottom line is less sacrosanct in Japan, Japanese stocks have been better investments over the years than American ones.

Almost all Japanese workers I met believed—rightly—that company success would benefit them and their co-workers. Nothing could be further from the truth in the U.S. Not only are managers discouraged from putting their employees first, but the adversarial American system of labor relations has destroyed the sense of shared purpose essential for both sides to benefit.

It works both ways in America. Companies can be foolishly blind to their employees' needs, and unions can undermine their own sources of employment. Under a system that has lessened employees' reasons to trust management, and under presidential administrations that have sought to avoid or end strikes with little regard for the long-term cost, unions in the auto and steel industries have pushed wages far above what their companies can ultimately pay without some sort of government protection or subsidy. Japanese steel and auto unions, by contrast, have known that managers' promises of long-term concern for their welfare depended ultimately on the long-term success of their companies. In exchange for promises of lifetime

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employment, the unions have accepted wages only modestly above the national average and have even encouraged subcontracting to companies whose pay is significantly below the national average because these companies often hire the kinds of unskilled people who in the U.S. might find no jobs at all.

It's hard to imagine how anything but good could come from a law shielding directors who want to act to benefit employees.

2. Declare a two-year moratorium on unfriendly takeovers.

U.S. managers fear Wall Street because takeover raids are so easy. Anyone with access to a billion dollars can buy a company and fire the managers.

English-speaking countries are almost alone in allowing financial wheeler-dealers such freedom. The wheeler-dealers give us some strengths: because wasteful companies are the best targets, takeovers often oust sloppy managers. But the disadvantages of such unfettered machinations outweigh the advantages. They make every corporate executive uncertain of his future. Since the best defense against takeover is a continuously high stock price, the merger mania has done much to promote short-term thinking.

B. Charles Ames, president of Reliance Electric, dramatized what's at stake here when he explained to *Business Week* why he gave up anti-takeover strategies and accepted Exxon's purchase of his company: "If I had the license to stop worrying about short-term earnings, I could grow this company through the roof."

Unfortunately Exxon's takeover of Reliance doesn't actually seem to be letting Ames or anyone else grow the company through the roof. Ames apparently didn't fit well in Exxon's bureaucracy—he left the company last year. And at last report Reliance was losing money.

Japanese law generally requires two-thirds of shareowners to approve a merger. (In the U.S. it's 51 percent.) And Japanese unions frequently analyze poor performance more carefully and criticize it more vigorously than Wall Street brokers usually do. Our laws and our unions should be able to permit that, and also let employees as well as stockholders vote on mergers. But since such a move is anything but simple, let's start with a two-year moratorium on unfriendly takeovers while we prepare new rules regulating this fever.

3. Let banks directly own up to five percent of companies.

Japan prospers partially because Japanese companies invest more than ours. One explanation is that Japanese banks get a bigger piece of the action. It stands to reason that banks whose relationships with their clients are cemented by ownership of their stocks will tend to finance a larger portion of the companies' investments. But because the New Deal feared banker power, American law bans bankers from buying stock to cement links with clients. U.S. banks financed much of the securities speculation that led up to America's great stock market crash of 1929, so the Roosevelt administration had good reason to limit their buying and financing of securities.

FDR seems to have overdone a good thing. Today, virtually no country allows the free-wheeling and dealing that America allowed in the twenties, but countries like Japan and Germany do allow banks to hold significant amounts of shares in their client companies. A bank in those countries that finances a risky project can expect an extra profit from the increase in the value of the shares it holds, and it also can be assured that much of the new banking business the project generates will flow in its direction. For the corporate borrower, of course, there's a clear incentive for cutting the banks in. The bank is then not only more likely to make the loan, it's more likely to do so at favorable interest rates.

Our New Deal laws haven't abolished banker power, but they have denied us the strengths that strong bank-company ties create. American banks can "own" parts of companies only indirectly, by holding stock in trust for others; and laws regarding fiduciary responsibility can make bank trust managers think they are obliged to insist on maximized short-term profits, not economic growth.

Japan lets banks directly hold up to five percent of the stock in most companies, and that seems a good maximum for us to establish.

4. Establish permanent credit controls.

Investment depends both on encouraging people to save and on getting their money channeled into productive uses rather than travel loans. Credit controls do both. Even the modest credit controls Jimmy Carter imposed

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last year—which required banks to put a few dollars aside when they lent to consumers—seem to have been crucial in increasing Americans' savings from an $80.2-billion-a-year rate in January to a $116.2-billion-a-year rate in May of 1980.

Carter's controls illustrated a peanut farmer's genius for putting intelligent policies to work in ways that would give them a bad name. He controlled credit as a desperation measure to slow an overheated economy—a move that was something like applying the emergency brake in a Cadillac going 90 miles an hour. No one knew how severely the emergency brake would jolt the passengers, and its shock probably caused much of the unpredictability of last year's economy. Moreover, Carter removed the controls after a few months, and the higher savings rate ended after a few months, too.

In Japan controls on consumer credit were a permanent part of the economy until a few years ago, when people's savings finally outstripped business's ability to put them to use. Permanent controls can promote savings and investment in the U.S. just as they did in Japan.

5. Recruit career bureaucrats as carefully as big corporations recruit managers.

As a senior in college in 1971, I aspired to manage something important. Corporations were out of favor, so I thought I might work for the federal government. Then I met the government's official campus recruiter—a social security office manager from nearby Pittsfield, Massachusetts. He was a small, thin man who wore the kind of ill-fitting brown suit I associated with high-school geometry teachers. I nodded politely, then did my best to find a job in journalism.

"SOME CHICAGO LOUT had to go and notice that we are coming up on the centennial of Franklin D. Roosevelt's birth, so now all the gears are grinding toward a year-long, tax-financed celebration of the event. Not inappropriately, the lout picked up a $200,00 federal grant to plan it. If the celebration is truly to be in the FDR mold, it will be perpetual so that our children's children can help pay for it.

For a free copy of the current issue of National Review, write to Dept W-7, 150 East 35th Street, New York, New York 10016.

A few U.S. agencies—the State Department and the National Labor Relations Board, for instance—recruit graduates carefully. But agencies charged with making our daily lives work—the Commerce Department, the Labor Department, and the Department of Transportation—hardly seem to try, and it isn't because the pay is unattractive. The Japanese equivalents of these agencies are comparable in prestige—although not in pecuniary promise—to top-flight law firms. The U.S. agencies, as we know too well, are often comparable in prestige to remedial-reading programs.

If the executive branch put more of its best bureaucrats to work recruiting talent and placing it in worthwhile jobs, there's a real chance the agencies would function better. Japan's experience indicates the best college graduates can be persuaded to enter government even without salaries competitive with IBM's or Mitsubishi's.

6. Keep on slashing low-interest loans.

The market interest rate is the going price of money. It indicates how much others will pay to borrow. If ordinary businessmen are willing to borrow at 18 percent, it makes no sense to create gimmicks so the privileged can borrow at 12 percent.

Japan's government lends a lot, but there are no tax-free bonds for big investors and few loans at less than what large companies pay banks. Probably the only time government should lend at less than market rates is when a recipient—a bumbling ally, perhaps—is deserving enough to merit a grant but might handle the money more responsibly if it were called a loan.

7. Create a small-business agency that can give bank-quality help to companies banks won't bother with.

Banks are our best-established business consultants. A good banker supplies both money and management aid to his clients. His consultations come free. Big business always gets them (and is likely to get more if we let banks own stock). But small businessmen, who need it most, often must overcome a barrier. As the head of the planning section at a government-funded Japanese credit guarantee corporation explained to me, "The banker will ask, 'Is he

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worth dealing with?' "

Many intelligent people know how to sell hardware or manufacture tools but don't know how—or don't have time—to project their cash flow and borrowing needs over the next three years. Just as I can go into a public library in almost any major American city and be reasonably sure of finding a librarian who can tell me how to assemble the information for a college-level research paper, small businessmen should be able to go to an agency in any major American city and be reasonably sure of finding someone who will tell them whether their financial problems are difficult or simple and—if they are simple—help them get the credit they need.

We already have that agency, of course. It's called the Small Business Administration. But a businessman's chance of getting good advice there is about the same as that of winning the state lottery. The SBA is burdened with poorly thought-out programs that seem designed to provide credit for companies that lose money faster than a retiree buying land in Florida, and it has never attracted the kinds of people who can command businessmen's respect.

Japanese small-business finance agencies, by contrast, have concentrated on doing something practical—making sure every company that wants one gets a thorough credit analysis. And they've hired people with skills comparable to those of loan officers in big banks. Given the fact that Japan pays more and better attention to small business, it's not surprising that nearly half of Japan's manufacturing employees work in firms with fewer than 100 workers. In the U.S., that number is only 23 percent, yet even here small business creates most of the new jobs and new technologies.

8. Fund more research directed at problems business will invest its own money in.

America tends to fund research because it seems important and because private companies lack interest. Unfortunately, there are usually good reasons why private companies lack interest in things like prefabricated "habitat modules" or fuel from "biomass." Research is most worthwhile when it results in something practical. Businessmen seem much more aware of that than bureaucrats.

In many fields, Japan won't give research grants unless companies pay a significant portion of the costs themselves. That encourages companies to do research they can put to use. The U.S. pays so much that companies make profits on research contracts. That encourages research that will lead to nothing but requests for further research.

Seiichi Ishizaka, director-general of Japan's Agency for Industrial Science and Technology, ran a desalinization research project in the mid-1970s aimed specifically at types of plants Middle Eastern countries were expected to buy in the eighties. He contrasts it with a U.S. project at the same time studying technology for a plant two and one-half times larger. The American research was many years from practical use, and could promise no clear economic benefits. Not surprisingly, Japanese companies have begun to lead the desalinization market.

9. Give engineers more fellowships abroad.

The Japanese learned to borrow technology partly because we gave them fellowships to study here. We can teach ourselves the same tricks by giving our students fellowships abroad.

There's only one problem: If your native culture is Japanese you're not likely to be truly comfortable outside Japan; if your native culture is America's melting pot you may be more tempted to make a career with a foreign company you encounter in your travels. But we can reduce the danger that we'll subsidize a brain drain by requiring students to work a few years in the U.S. after graduation abroad.

10. Give fewer unemployment benefits to young people with no dependents.

Japanese under 30—people who ought to be developing good work habits but might be tempted to use unemployment to pay for extended vacations—are limited to 90 days on the dole. People over 30, the age when most Japanese have their first child, can receive 180 days of benefits. Those over 55 can get 300.

America needs more complex rules than Japan because America is more complex. We can't assume a person under 30 has no family to support. But the principle is a good one. Unemployment eligibility should vary with need. □

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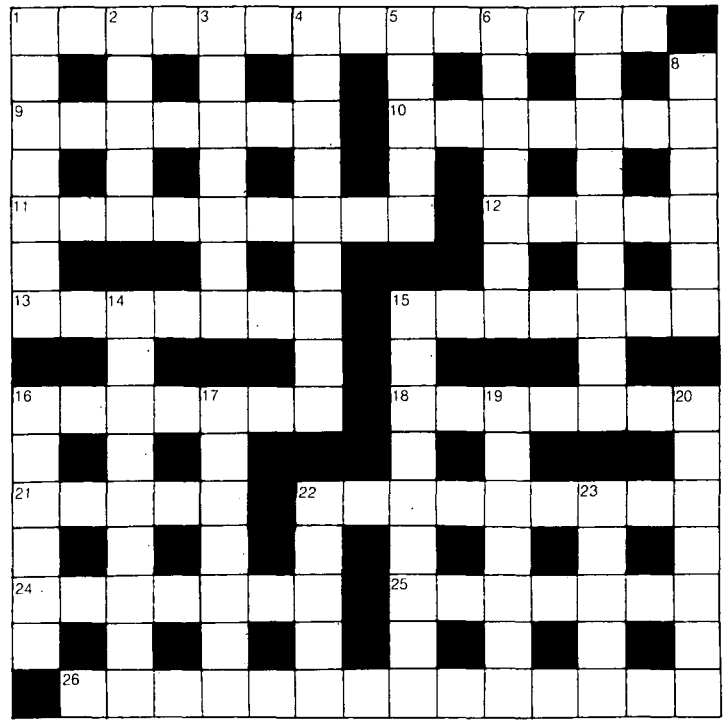
The Political Puzzle

by John Barclay

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2,3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word.



ACROSS

1. Lost pitch calls for labor stoppage. (8,6)
9. Make you steady around Election Day. (7)
10. Postponed a song indeed. (7)
11. Estimate a lily beet production. (7,2)
12. Strap found in path on grass. (5)
13. Ruth and Jackson say "keen!" wildly. (7)
15. Atonement for a change? (7)
16. Old men turn about following in auto fuel. (7)
18. Plus ca change 'tis same artist. (7)
21. Worse in that at nadir errors occur. (5)
22. Crazy pile giver has special right. (9)
24. Card game the French created to express appreciation. (7)
25. Rain, range or ambition. (7)
26. Reluctant federal employees gathered rarer toll coins. (3,11)

DOWN

1. Part of your car in New York City. (7)
2. Leather that's not faithful, we hear. (5)
3. Wife made Ted beam. (7)
4. Followers of silly, silly oats. (9)
5. National leader met with prosecutor inside. (5)
6. Changed, altered, or connected. (7)
7. Convention speakers upset Rosey Kent. (9)
8. Folk wisdom a little publicity matures? (6)
14. Make Pharaoh's wife fit in tree awkwardly. (9)
15. A miner upset before Communist comes up for rest. (9)
16. Warehouse for Japanese game feather? (6)
17. Wandering Cartier is unpredictable. (7)
19. Not worthwhile to put six in test. (7)
20. See germ tossed as it comes out. (7)
22. Dress up and about in confinement. (5)
23. The 400 became 51 in summer in Paris. (5)

Answers to last month's puzzle:

J	U	S	T	I	C	E		O	C	O	N	N	O	R
E		U		S		L		V		U		E		I
F	U	N	E	R	A	L		E	S	T	A	T	E	S
F		B		I		I		R		S		T		E
E	M	E	R	G	E	S		S	T	I	L	L	E	R
R		A		H				I		D		E		
S	O	M	E	T	H	I	N	G		E	N	D	U	P
O						N		H						E
N	O	R	U	N		D	E	T	E	C	T	I	O	N
		E		A		I				O		M		I
D	E	F	A	M	E	S		D	E	V	I	A	N	T
E		E		I		S		U		E		G		E
C	U	R	A	B	L	E		P	O	R	T	I	O	N
K		E		I		N		E		U		N		C
S	T	E	W	A	R	T		S	U	P	R	E	M	E

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WHO'S WHO in the Administration

To the average reader, the story on the front page of the Sunday, August 16, *Washington Post* looked like a very positive piece about **Edwin Meese.** It called him "President Meese"—first among equals while the president vacationed. In truth, of course, a story of this kind has anything but a positive effect on the career of a top White House aide. It stirs a natural resentment at the office and gives one's rivals a chance to build a case that the aide in question is usurping the president's authority. This can even be the case when someone is seen as acting like the president merely in his own department, as Alexander Haig discovered earlier this year, and Joe Califano and James Schlesinger learned to their regret under Carter and Ford. Better to exercise one's power quietly. It's less noticed by the public, but at least you get to keep it.

Meese's problems, however, go beyond the *Post* story and the series of unflattering leaks about him that followed. White House insiders suggest a comparison with the case of **Lyn Nofziger,** the White House political director who is planning to leave the administration soon because he's not involved in enough important decisions. Like Meese, Nofziger has been with Reagan for years, and during the campaign he served not only as press secretary but as an intimate. If he didn't exactly cut the right figure to be press secretary in the new administration, he was expected, at the very least, to be in Reagan's innermost circle after the election. Of course it didn't turn out that way. Nofziger's mistake was to make Reagan look dumb in public once too often during the campaign and transition. He would cut his boss off in mid-sentence not as part of some prearranged way to keep a press conference short, but because he too obviously feared Reagan would let loose with a damaging blooper. Reagan—and his wife—knew condescension when they saw it and resented the affront.

Now Meese has been caught doing the same thing—interrupting Reagan in public during an impromptu California press conference as if he thought he was a little smarter than the man he works for. Insiders say he may have offended the same two people Nofziger did. . . .

In

DEFENSE

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs—**John S. Herrington** has been deputy assistant to the president for personnel.

JUSTICE

Assistant Attorney General, Civil Division—**J. Paul McGrath** has been with the New York law firm of Dewey, Ballantine, Bushby, Palmer and Wood.

Solicitor General—**Rex E. Lee** was dean of Brigham Young University Law School.

Deputy Commissioner, Immigration and Naturalization Service—**Alan C. Nelson** served as state director of rehabilitation services when Reagan was governor of California.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Inspector General—**Charles Dempsey,** a longtime HUD employee, has been the acting inspector general.

LABOR

Undersecretary—**Malcolm R. Lovell, Jr.,** served as assistant secretary of labor for manpower under President Nixon.

Director, Women's Bureau—**Leonora Cole-Alexander** was vice-president for student affairs at the University of the District of Columbia.

STATE

Ambassador to Czechoslovakia—**Jack F. Matlock** has been deputy chief of mission and charge d'affaires in Moscow.

Ambassador to India—**Harry G. Barnes** is a former director general of the foreign service.

Ambassador to Luxembourg—**John Dolibois,** a native of Luxembourg, was vice-president for development and alumni affairs at Miami (Ohio) University.

Ambassador to Pakistan—**Ronald I. Spiers** is a career foreign service officer.

Ambassador to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands—**Virginia Schafer** is a career State Department employee.

Ambassador to Peru—**Frank Ortiz** was relieved of his duties as ambassador to Guatemala by President Carter for being too close to rightists there.

Ambassador to Romania—**David B. Funderburk** is a history professor at Campbell University, Buies Creek, North Carolina.

Ambassador to Saudi Arabia—**Richard W. Murphy** has been ambassador to the Philippines.

Ambassador to Syria—**Robert P. Paganelli** has been deputy chief of mission in Rome.

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Ambassador to Thailand—**John Gunther Dean,** most recently ambassador to Lebanon, served as ambassador to Cambodia until the collapse of the Lon Nol regime in 1975.

Ambassador to the USSR—**Arthur A. Hartman** has been ambassador to France.

U.S. Representative to the European Economic Community—**George Southall Vest** is a career foreign service officer.

TREASURY

Comptroller of the Currency—**C. Todd Conover** has been a partner in a San Francisco consulting company.

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TRANSPORTATION

Chief Counsel, Federal Aviation Administration—**J. E. Murdock III** was a lawyer for United Airlines.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Civil Aeronautics Board
Chairman—**Clinton Dan McKinnon** is owner-operator of KSON AM-FM in San Diego.

Environmental Protection Agency
Assistant Administrator for Water—**Bruce R. Baretta** was a pollution control specialist with the Department of Commerce.

Director of Public Affairs—**Byron Nelson** has been press secretary to Senator Frank Murkowski.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
Chairman—**William M. Isaac** has been on the board of the corporation since 1978.

General Services Administration
Inspector General—**Joseph Sickon** was assistant inspector general at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

International Communication Agency
Associate Director—**Richard Bishirjian** was professor of political science at the College of New Rochelle in New York.

National Labor Relations Board
Member—**Robert P. Hunter** was an aide to Senator Orrin Hatch.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Member—**Thomas Morgan Roberts** was treasurer of George Bush's presidential campaign.

Securities and Exchange Commission
General Counsel—**Edward F. Greene** was director of the corporate finance division of the SEC.

Director of Corporate Finance—**Lee Spencer** was deputy director of the corporate finance division of the SEC.

Out

CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
Chairman—**Marvin S. Cohen** will join the law firm of Stroock, Stroock and Lavan.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Member—**Peter A. Bradford** will join the cabinet of Maine Governor Joseph E. Brennan.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
General Counsel—**Ralph C. Ferrara** will help establish the Washington office of the New York law firm of Debevoise and Plimpton.

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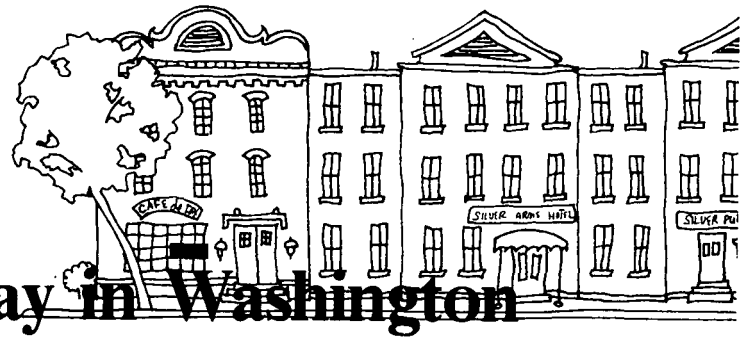

Where to Stay in Washington

Foggy Bottom

Situated between Georgetown and downtown Washington, Foggy Bottom is small; partly residential, and primarily made up of the expanding George Washington University (to the dismay of the preservationists) and a number of federal agencies, including State, AID, the Office of Personnel Management, Interior, the EEOC, and the Federal Reserve. For entertainment there's the Kennedy Center, and Georgetown's shops and restaurants are just a few blocks away. From the Foggy Bottom subway stop you can go right to the Mall, where you'll find the Smithsonian, the National Gallery and other museums, and Capitol Hill. There are seven hotels in this area—the standard variety as well as those with apartment-size rooms with kitchens. The former are featured this month.

The Allen Lee, 2224 F Street, N.W., (202) 331-1224. The lobby is a mishmash of naugahyde furniture, colonial-style tables, stained glass lamps, and hanging plants, all of which have seen better days. The paint in the narrow hallways is peeling, the carpeting worn, the communal baths appear only moderately clean, and the rooms are furnished with what look like tag sale rejects. But the rates take all this into account. Singles and doubles without bath are $17 and $22.80 respectively. With bath, singles are $18.50-$22.50, doubles, $29.40-$32. A cot is $3 extra. The hotel doesn't have a restaurant but serves complimentary coffee and donuts in the lobby on Sunday. Since there are no parking facilities, your options are the street and a nearby parking garage.

Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge, 2601 Virginia Avenue, N.W., (202) 965-2700, (800) 954-2000. Aside from its secure place in history as the command post for the Watergate burglars, this is just another Howard Johnson's—orange and turquoise decor, a souvenir/gift shop in the lobby, Muzak, and the 24-hour HoJo restaurant for insomniacs and cabdrivers. Formica furniture and plaid wallpaper give the rooms a run-of-the-mill, sterile look, although some are large enough to accommodate king-sized beds, two sinks, and a sleep sofa. The rooms at the front of the hotel (which faces the Watergate complex) have balconies; those at the rear overlook the freeway. Singles, $52; doubles, $62; additional persons in room, $4 each. Suites (two connecting rooms) are $110 for up to four people. None of the rooms have kitchen facilities, but all have refrigerators, which helps make up for the lack of room service. There's a small cocktail lounge on the mezzanine and a rooftop pool (the water is usually on the warm side) and terrace in the summer. Valet service and do-it-yourself laundry are available, and parking is free.

The Watergate Hotel, 2650 Virginia Avenue, N.W., (202) 965-2300, (800) 424-2736. A favorite of Jerry Zipkin and Reagan's millionaire friends from California. Within the ten-acre Watergate complex you can buy almost anything your heart desires, from designer clothes, Indian rugs, and handcrafted pottery to delicate French pastries, groceries, liquor, a dozen roses, or new heels and soles for your shoes. And the Kennedy Center's right out the back door. **Jean Louis,** specializing in very expensive *nouvelle cuisine,* is a "private club" at lunch but lets the public in for dinners. The **Watergate Terrace** is the hotel's main dining room, serving three (again, expensive) meals daily. You can have a drink, surrounded by Persian saddle rugs, in the **Saddle Bar,** (but no mechanical bull—sorry) or in the **Potomac Lounge** in the lobby, where there's also live piano music in the evening, and tea and pastries in the afternoon. Decorated in an eclectic combination of antique and contemporary, including French doors and Chinese chests, many of the rooms and suites afford a lovely view of the Potomac and about three-fourths of them have kitchen facilities (there's a $10 one-time charge for gas and utensils). All baths come with phones and heat lamps, and suites have shower massages and multiple phone lines. Singles, $92-$128; doubles, $110-$148; suites, $260-$700. A third person in the room is $20, but there's no charge for children under 12. There's complete room service and valet service, and a concierge is available; parking is $8. The **Watergate Health Club,** with indoor pool, sauna, and exercise room, is located in the hotel and is free to hotel guests.

—Donna Fenn

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Memo of the Month

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Washington, DC 20260

DATE: August 3, 1981

OUR REF: G10:GFM:jcf

SUBJECT: Air Travel

TO:

Executive Committee Members
Regional Postmasters General

In view of the air controllers strike, no one is to travel by air unless it is absolutely essential!

The Postmaster General, DPMG, SAPMGs and RPMGs will decide what travel is essential. The limited flights which will be available should not be used by people who do not have urgent business to conduct.

If necessary, resort to conference calls and the mails to communicate.

Gerald F. Merna
Executive Assistant to
the Postmaster General

cc: Mr. Bolger
Mr. Benson

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Political Booknotes

Public affairs books to be published in October

American National Security: Policy and Process. *Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and associates. Johns Hopkins, $30/ $10.50.*

The American People and South Africa: Publics, Elites, and Policy-making Processes. *Alfred O. Hero, Jr., John Barratt. Lexington, $21.95.*

Before the Colors Fade. *Harry Reasoner. Knopf, $10.95.*

The CIA Under Reagan, Bush, and Casey. *Ray S. Cline. Acropolis, $12.50.* The title is misleading, since the book, an updated version of the former deputy director's 1976 book, *Secrets, Spies and Scholars,* was written before there was anything to say about the new crowd.

Cline is a pro-CIA conservative, but he believes the Agency has often gotten in over its head. He contends that operations like the "secret" Laotian army and election-tampering in Chile were doomed from the start because they involved more secrets than could possibly be kept. Even so, the Agency itself doesn't come in for much blame. Cline is in "the president made us do it" school of ex-CIA officials.

—*Larry Mahl*

The Decline and Resurgence of Congress. *James L. Sundquist. Brookings Institution, $32.95/ $15.95.*

Do New Leaders Make a Difference?: Executive Succession and Public Policy Under Capitalism and Socialism. *Valerie Bunce. Princeton, $22.50/$6.95.*

Exploring the Johnson Years. *Robert A. Divine, ed. University of Texas Press, $25.*

The Fish Is Red: The Story of the Secret War Against Castro. *Warren Hinckle, William W. Turner. Harper and Row, $14.95.*

The Hidden Election: Politics and Economics in the 1980 Presidential Campaign. *Thomas Ferguson, Joel Rogers, eds. Pantheon, $16.* A collection of eight essays on the 1980 campaign that tries to be different but only partially succeeds. The editors believe most instant election analysis books fail because "they ignore or gloss over the candidates' links to the business community, sources of money, prominent (if unpublicized) supporters, and affiliations with the traditional network of national policymaking." Given that ideological lens, it's not surprising we learn more about David Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, and the Trilateral Commission than almost anything else.

Journalists Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway are the only contributors without academic pedigrees, and it shows. Their essay is the best. They interview supply-side apostle Jude Wanniski, who at the time of the interview had just finished a memo to Reagan on supply-side economics: ". . . I said to Reagan, no matter what sort of box you get yourself into, one thing you've got to remember is Be Stubborn."

—*James Lyons*

How Courts Govern America. *Richard Neely. Yale, $15.* The author is occasionally pretentious, but as a fellow West Virginian I can sympathize with his need to identify with respectable institutions like Aspen and Yale. How else is someone with a mountain accent to be taken seriously? He is also, I think, wrong in the central importance he gives to the courts as what makes America work: all too often they are precisely what keeps the country *from* working. However, all that is wrong with *How Courts Govern America* fades into insignificance compared with what is good about it—the author's consistently candid and often quite funny anecdotes about his experiences as a candidate, legislator, and judge make the book must reading for any student of government. Note: will some alumnus please bequeath a copy of Fowler to the editors at Yale University Press, accompanied by a request that they read the section on "that" and "which"?

—*Charles Peters*

The Japanese Challenge to U.S. Industry. *Jack Baranson. Lexington, $19.95.*

The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography. *Thomas C. Reeves. Stein and Day, $19.95.*

The New Kingmakers: An Inside Look at the Powerful Men Behind America's Political Campaigns. *David Chagall. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $12.95.* Chagall tells us that one of the greatest pleasures a political media consultant can experience is a "virgin"—a first-time candidate. But watch out, warned one consultant, "once they get in office they become pains in the ass. Suddenly they become experts—they stick their noses into the ball game. That's when you get big problems."

Of course, consultants themselves are only as good as their batting averages, and if their magic doesn't work, they won't have the luxury of acting supercilious for very long.

Some consultants are very principled and will take only certain candidates and issues. But the vast majority take their own politics only as far as the party line. They "do" either Democrats or Republicans (or, in many cases, foreign politicians). Beyond that, all that matters is that the candidate has lots of money to spend.

Chagall isn't much troubled by any of this, and he finds a peculiar justification for the kingmakers' existence: "In a society that prides itself on openness and competition, the hired guns of politics are bastions of individual enterprise."

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Sounds like a Reagan ad, and not a very good one at that.

—*Michael Hiestand*

Petroleum Politics and the Texas Railroad Commission. *David F. Prindle. University of Texas Press, $14.95.* A lively book about an obscure state regulatory body that, through an accident of geology and jurisdiction, wields enormous power in determining how oil and gas are produced and sold in this country. Prindle delights in pointing out the cozy relationship between the Texas Railroad Commission and the industries it regulates.

The Railroad Commission, besides having a misnomer for a name, is an odd regulatory bird because its members are elected in an at-large statewide contest. Beginning in the 1930s, the Commission exercised a distinct preference for oil and gas producers over consumers, but within that bias it preferred local, risk-taking independents to the major companies that came from out-of-state. This is important because the Commission has often served as referee between the majors and the independents on such issues as production levels, ownership rights, and market access.

Prindle, who writes with a fine ability to make technical and economic issues interesting, is appalled by the free-market rhetoric so often mouthed by producers in recent years. He documents 50 years of efforts by producers to maintain a web of price-support regulations that benefited them. "Debate over government regulation takes place in a twilight zone between outright propaganda and cherished myth," he writes, suggesting that members a bit more skeptical of industry might keep the Commission more balanced. (See *The Washington Monthly,* October 1980, for a first-person description by Democrat Jim Hightower of his nearly successful populist campaign for the Commission.)

—*Pat Martin*

Portrait of an Election: The 1980 Presidential Campaign. *Elizabeth Drew. Simon & Schuster, $14.95.* The author's articles for the *Atlantic* in the late 1960s earned her a respected place in the history of journalism. She may have been the first writer to make the operations of government agencies like the FCC and the Army Corps of Engineers understandable and interesting to people who were neither civil servants nor political scientists. In the early 1970s her program on PBS showed her to be a skillful interviewer, and as a panelist on "Agronsky and Company," where excursions into the unpredictable are rare indeed, she is seldom rigid and almost always sensible.

During the early seventies she began reporting for *The New Yorker,* and her writing came under the influence of its great editor, William Shawn. Shawn tends to favor a style that leaves analysis to the inferential powers of the reader. Sometimes this kind of writing simply seems mindless. This is why Drew is called Nancy by those at *The New Yorker* who do not share Shawn's enthusiasm for her.

Shawn's preference for simply laying out all the facts works best when the subject is underpublicized (e.g., how Robert Moses got things done), or when the writers themselves have some sense of selectivity about what facts they will present (e.g., Calvin Trillin). Neither of those is the case with Elizabeth Drew. Much of the time she is working with the most familiar of events—Watergate, national elections—without the ability to distinguish between significant and insignificant details. Thus even in her best book, *Senator,* she helpfully informed her readers that Iowa was a rectangular state in the Midwest. (In lower levels of the publishing world this approach would lead to the suspicion that the writer was being paid by the word.)

There is less of Nancy in this book than in her two *Washington Journal* volumes—*Portrait of an Election* is much closer to *Senator* in its overall quality. She is especially insightful in her understanding of how Reagan the political leader was shaped by Reagan's career as an actor. Still, those who yearn for Nancy will not be disappointed. Here is her description of a church that Carter visited during the campaign:

"The church itself, a rectangular building, seems fairly new, and has white walls, blue-and-red-glass windows, and pale wood panels on the stage."

—*Charles Peters*

The Road from Here: Liberalism and Realities in the 1980s. *Paul Tsongas. Knopf, $12.95.* A neo-liberal manifesto by the junior senator from Massachusetts. Flawed but important and well worth reading.

Somoza and the Legacy of U.S. Involvement in Central America. *Bernard Diederich. Dutton, $19.75.*

Tribes on the Hill: An Investigation into the Rituals and Realities of an Endangered American Tribe—The Congress of the United States. *J. McIver Weatherford. Rawson, Wade, $13.95.* The human mind can grasp some complex institutions; others are unknowable. You can get a handle on the AFL-CIO, Exxon, and the New York Yankees. Even the presidency is comprehensible if examined exhaustively enough. But some institutions simply defy any efforts to make them intelligible: the Saudi royal family, Tibetan Lamaism, and the Congress of the United States.

This barrenness of useful analysis is not for lack of effort. Journalists try their hands. Former members publish self-serving nostalgia. Political scientists bring to bear their "content analysis," "roll-call analysis," and "factor analysis" to reaffirm the same point that office-holding is delightful and eternal office-holding is eternally delightful. Sociologists have taken their cuts; so have psychologists. The one academic group that has been conspicuously absent is the anthropologists, who might have

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been expected to make some interesting comparisons between hunting and gathering, and humping and blathering.

This book tries to do that. *Tribes on the Hill* is a product of the fundamental tenet of modern anthropology: the universality of function. Simply stated, this means that all societies have certain myths, rituals, and symbols in common but find different ways to express and manipulate them. If you accept that premise, the potlatch ceremony of the Chinook Indians of the Pacific Northwest differs little from a political fund-raiser at the F Street Club, and the informal caucuses of House freshmen elected in a particular year can be likened to Kikuyu circumcision rites. After all, they perform essentially the same functions.

I don't know that I buy all of this, but the parallels contained here are so delightfully imaginative and so crisply erudite you find yourself going along with him for the fun of it.

Weatherford, who observed this baffling institution at close range as a staff aide to Senator John Glenn, concludes that congressional rituals have gotten totally out of hand and the ceremonies and incantations of our national legislature have come very close to defining what the institution is all about.

He and I part company here. Congress would be a far less engrossing place without its totems and kinship groups. We tried to divest the presidency of magical rites and found the result not to our liking. And, besides, if Congress had been demystified, Weatherford would not have wanted to write about it in the first place. In that case we would have been deprived of a clever and enchanting book by an academic who really knows how to write.

—*Ross K. Baker*

The Ultimate Resource. *Julian L. Simon. Princeton, $14.50.*

Up the Tube: Prime-Time TV and the Silverman Years. *Sally Bedell. Viking, $13.95.* Now that Fred Silverman has been booted from NBC, this book isn't so relevant. But Silverman's career is important to any understanding of television in the 1970s. More than anyone else, he determined the content of the 22 hours of weekly prime-time TV. If you want the details—show-by-show—they are here.

So are the statistics, which grow no less amazing through repetition: Advertising rates for the most popular programs—such as *Three's Company*—are now up to $200,000 a minute. Seventy-six million homes have television sets, and the average daily viewing per household is now six hours, 17 minutes. Americans spend an average of 2,000 hours a year watching the tube and less than 50 hours in "direct sexual involvement."

The book also contains a glossary of prime-time jargon. Wonder no more about the official definition of "jiggle." It's "a young female television personality running at top speed wearing little underwear." Silverman excelled at creating jiggles, but he also did a few good things. *All in the Family,* for instance, wouldn't have made it on the air if he hadn't pushed it while at CBS.

—*Joan Shaffer*

Yellow Rain: A Journey Through the Terror of Chemical Warfare. *Sterling Seagrave. M. Evans, $11.95.* If you're wondering how the U.S. first got the idea of stockpiling nerve gas and other weapons of chemical warfare, Seagrave provides an answer. It turns out that during the 1920s a World War I veteran named Amos Fries "virtually singlehandedly manipulated all the essential levers of power in government and private industry" to bring about the creation of a well-funded Chemical Warfare Service. While Europeans who survived mustard gas in the trenches sought to ban chemical warfare, Colonel Fries had a vision of "wars without battlefields."

This chronicle of the develop-

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Washington's cherry tree, Jackson's duels, Taft's bathtub, Johnson's vanity, Reagan's jelly beans —the foibles and fancies of all 39 of our Chief Executives fill this "delightful and amusing book by a scholar who carries his learning gracefully."
—*Theodore H. White*

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ment of chemical weaponry reveals an uninformed public and unsophisticated military. The gases were produced on the assumption that they would be shipped all over the world when the Cold War turned hot. Instead they have been left to decay in depots all across the country, "threaten[ing] what they intended to protect." Meanwhile, Seagrave claims, new evidence indicates the Soviets are using gas in Afghanistan.

Super-poisons are easier to handle than they used to be, which is good news for terrorists. More good news for the bad guys, Seagrave notes, is that in 1980 NATO troops couldn't even get their gasmasks on correctly in front of TV cameras.

—M.H.

Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower Takes America into the Middle East. *Donald Neff. Linden Press/ Simon & Schuster, $17.95.* Neff, a former *Time* correspondent, was let loose amid previously untapped documents in the Eisenhower Presidential Library and the archives of the United Nations. The result is a highly readable, extensive account of the events surrounding the Suez crisis of 1956.

Neff argues that the last, unfortunate vestiges of British and French colonialism merged with fear-generated Israeli intransigence and led the three nations to "gang up" on Nasser of Egypt. As a result, the West missed an opportunity to exploit the Russian crackdown in Hungary that was happening at the very same time. It couldn't very well point a finger at Russian imperialism just at the time it was turning the screws on Nasser.

Nasser, and to a lesser extent David Ben Gurion, emerge as heroes. But the book's star is Eisenhower, whose actions, according to Neff, permitted Nasser to survive and thus salvaged from the crisis the West's only political and moral capital.

Much of what Neff writes is likely to arouse controversy. For example, while Ben Gurion is portrayed as a great leader, he and his fellow Israelis also come off as ruthless warmongers, frequent liars, and abusers of the U.S. peace-keeping force.

—Rick Reynolds

(continued from page 9)
government employees. Nor does the comparability standard, which is established by government employees themselves, take into account the civil servants' generous retirement plan and their tenure.

Tenure is, I suspect, the main reason why the press treats the claims of civil servants so kindly. Members of the Newspaper Guild believe passionately in job security. They covet the security of tenured academics and civil servants, and thus have an interest in avoiding criticism of tenure or of those who enjoy its benefits.

To bring you up to date on those poor underpaid civil servants:

- 330,000 make more than $30,000 a year
- 47,000 now make more than $50,000 a year

The figures do not include the military or U.S. Postal Service. The average postal employee now makes $20,000. Within three years he will be making $27,500. . . .

The media tilt to the bureaucrat was never more evident than in "The MacNeil-Lehrer Report" of August 5. During a half-hour interview with PATCO leader Robert Poli, the anti-strike oath the air controllers had taken was not mentioned once. Since this oath was central to the government's case, the omission was curious. "MacNeil-Lehrer," while generally worthy of praise for trying to explore issues in more depth than television usually attempts, does relentlessly tilt toward the liberal, respectable side. This tends to be a problem in public television and radio generally, as does the humorlessness of MacNeil, and most especially of Lehrer. . . .

When Ralph Bailey, chairman of Conoco, was asked why his stockholders had gone along so readily with the takeover of his company, he said that today's investors are more interested in quick gains than in a company's long-term growth—and that the bidding for Conoco, which doubled the market value of the company's stock in two months, produced offers they could not refuse.

So the stockholders gained while the country lost. And all that money Du Pont used to buy Conoco could have been spent on new plants that would have expanded our economy. It is possible, of course, that Conoco's stockholders will invest their money in new enterprises that will expand the economy, but it seems much more likely they will use their money to do just what Du Pont did—invest in existing assets or buy real estate or old coins or antiques or oriental rugs, none of which provides jobs for anyone but the salesmen involved.

The New York Times may be innocent about the rackets of federal employees, but it certainly is on to some of those of the people who work for New York City. The *Times*'s Judith Cummings found that the New York City Transit Authority didn't know what 300 of its bus drivers have been doing since their Grumman buses went out of service last December. The only thing that's certain is that 42 drivers are being paid. When Cummings asked John D. Simpson, president of the Transit Authority, if it was possible that some drivers had gone without driving a bus for weeks, his reply was, "I asked Andy [Simpson's aide] about that and he said he just didn't know."

—Charles Peters

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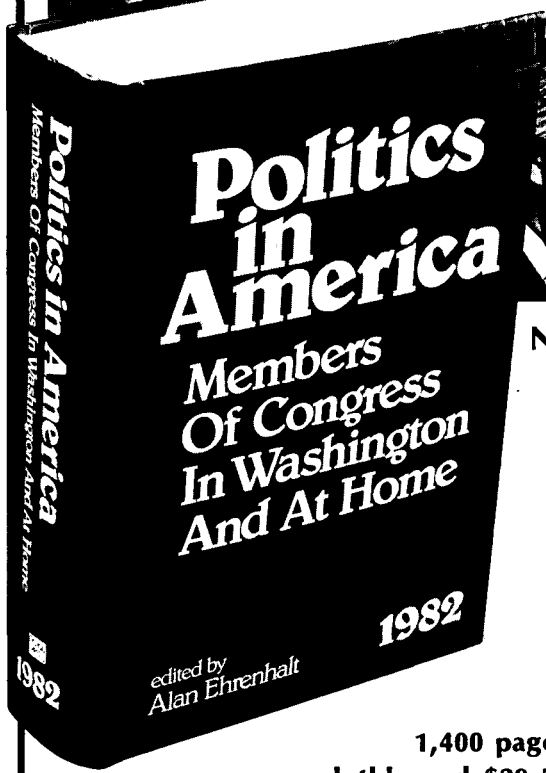

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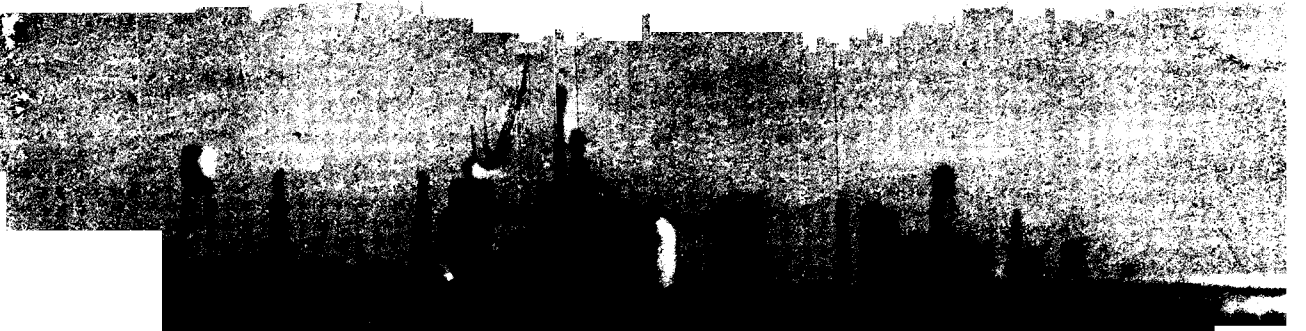

"It's life as usual in the big wildlife reserve nearby," says Orval Fouse, Supervisor, Utilities & Environmental Engineering at Gulf's Port Arthur, Texas, refinery. "The snow geese still spend a few months here each year during migration. The marshes around the refinery are still full of raccoons, otters, minks, muskrats, even some deer and bobcats.

"To me, that's very good news, because it means they're totally unaffected by the fact that, for the past 20 years, we've been refining what's called 'sour crude.'

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"Can oil and wildlife mix? They do at Gulf's Port Arthur refinery."

Snow Geese photographed near Port Arthur by Dr. John

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